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MobileBeat

THE MOBILE ENTERTAINER'S MAGAZINE • WWW.MOBILEBEAT.COM

ISSUE 157 JULY 2014

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It's the middle of summer. Time to think about going...

BACK TO SCHOOL

FOCUS ON YOUTH

End-of-School-Year Events

Pleasing Two Audiences

GWYW: School Edition

Building Rapport

Weekday Fun

PERFORMANCE

Top 10 Tips for MCs

How to Move into Video

BUSINESS

Non-Refundable Deposits

Promo on Twitter

GEAR

DigiGames Extreme Bingo • Dawn Pro T100 & T50 Powered Speakers

Mackie SRM550 & SRM1850 Powered Speakers • Fastset Utility Table

Alto Professional Black Series Speakers + Stealth Wireless System

INDUSTRY

Inside inMusic

Rob Kuron & ProAAL

PEOPLE

Jason Parent

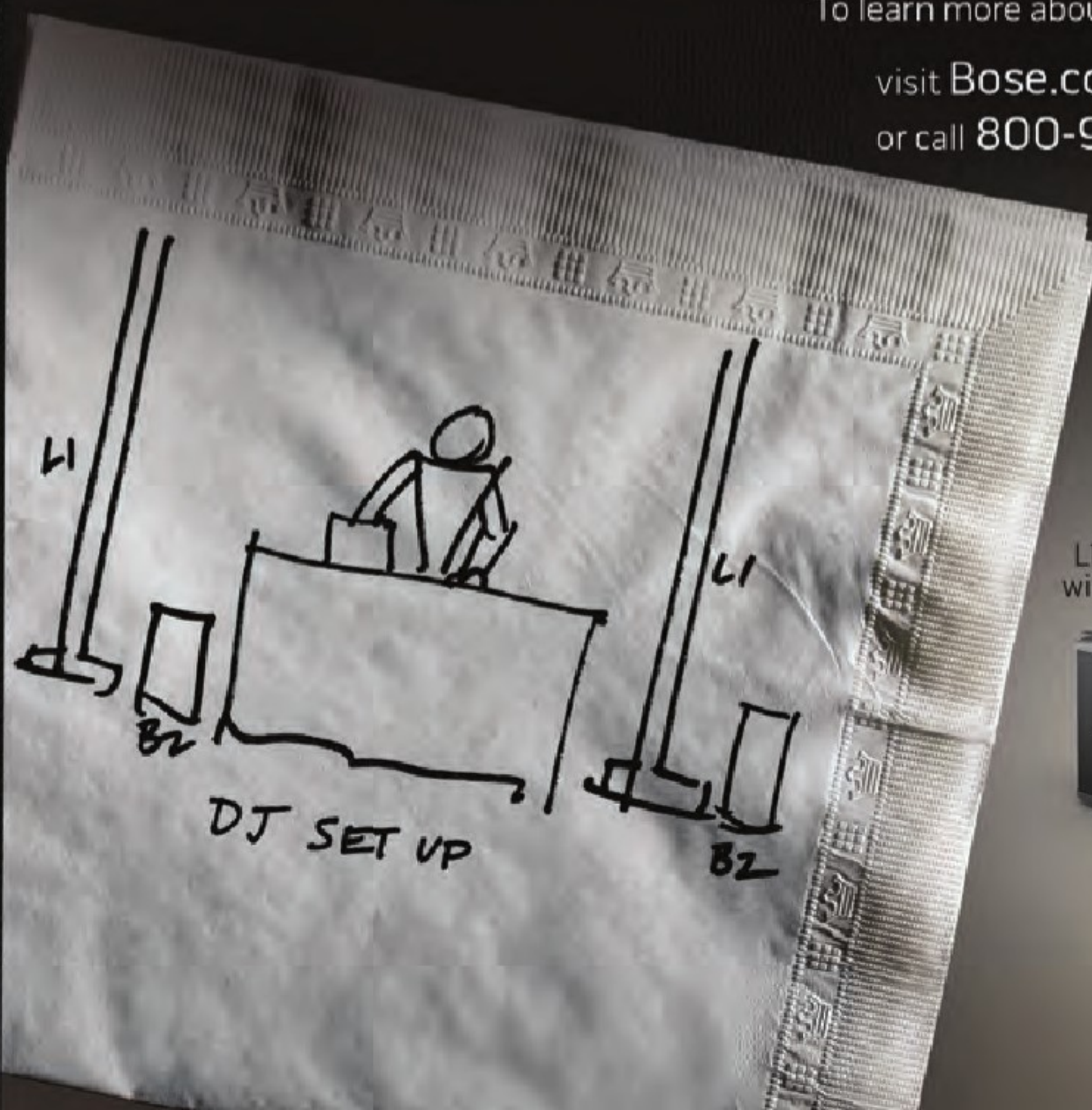


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*Dear Reader,
Hopefully this note finds you well and enjoying your summer vacation...wait, I mean enjoying a busy and profit-making season...*

Yes, while we all (hopefully) can make some time for relaxation and rejuvenation this summer, I can only hope that you are also finding the summer season to be full of good business opportunities, with a minimum of down time.

In this issue, we bridge the gap between summer and fall, between vacation time and school time, and weekend and weekday, when it comes to serving the youth market, with: some practical advice on building rapport with the kids, from youth event master, Arnoldo Offermann; ideas for also pleasing the adults as well as the students at your school events, along with thoughts on applying Mark Ferrell's "Getting What You're Worth" concepts to the youth market, from Marc Andrews; the pros and cons of year-end events for schools, by Jay Maxwell; some of Mike Ficher's musings on the endless cycle of group dance trends, powered by the youth culture; and another hearty helping of practical gig ideas for both summer and fall, from our newest contributors, Keith Alan and Rob Peters, who have taken over the Midweek Money column. All in all, quite a bit of information that will hopefully help you in your efforts to serve and be successful in the school/youth event market.

Speaking of new contributors, you may have noticed some other new faces in the last few issues. Two new expert contributors who have made the jump from the occasional "feature" designation into the ranks of regular "columnists" are Staci Nichols, who's Wedding Beat column will offer a unique and creative perspective on all things related to mobile DJs and wedding receptions, along with other topics requiring a fresh take; and Joe Bunn, who will challenge you with direct, practical tips and tricks for those two key aspects of DJing, mixing and MCing.

Another new contributor is Rob Schenk, an attorney, who attendees at the last MBLV event will probably remember. He has the rare gift of taking a usually dry, boring subject—in this case DJ legal matters—and making it interesting, even enjoyable. We are lucky that his writing on the subject is just as entertaining as his live presentations.

And finally, on that topic of live presentations, I have to add to this regular note on the editorial side of Mobile Beat some quick thoughts on Mobile Beat Las Vegas, our next live event coming up in February 2015. After learning about what Producer Mike Buonaccorso and his creative team are cooking up for the latest MBLV, I am blown away with how different, exciting and potentially life-changing this new concept for Mobile Beat's in-person experience will be for those who choose to attend. More info will follow in upcoming issues, but you'll thank yourself later if you take advantage of the limited-time offer you'll find on the facing page. Be part of "paradigm shift" in DJ industry events—don't miss it!

– Dan Walsh, Editor-in-Chief

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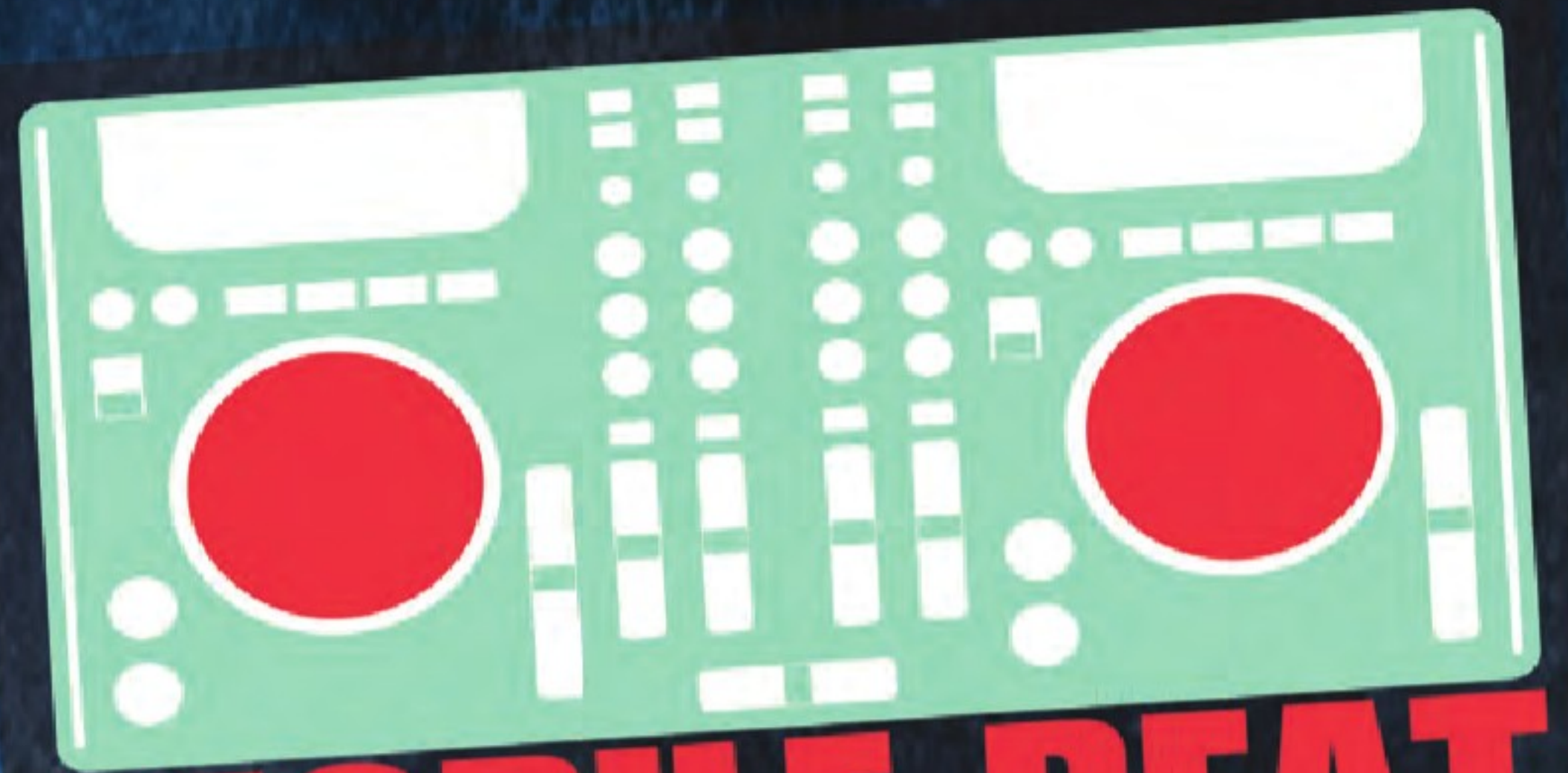
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inMusic Adds Karl Detken to Numark Team

inMusic (www.inmusicbrands.com), home of industry-leading music and audio technology brands, has announced the appointment of Karl Detken as the Numark Director of Marketing. In this new



role, Detken will be responsible for driving the company's marketing strategy; increasing uptake of products in key markets; and refining the company's communication strategy, product marketing, and customer messaging initiatives.

With more than 40 years of personal experience as a DJ, producer, and

musician, Detken has spent the last two decades immersed in the world of DJ and pro-audio product design, development, and marketing. In particular, his expertise in product marketing, artist relations, and social media branding have contributed to a long track record of successfully driving business for brands like Pioneer DJ, Chauvet, and V-Moda.

"I'm personally excited to bring Karl aboard to drive our marketing initiatives for Numark," says Jack O'Donnell, owner and CEO of inMusic. "His knowledge and experience in the DJ market are formidable and will allow us to introduce an even broader audience to our product line."

Detken echoed O'Donnell's sentiments, saying, "I've long admired Numark's ability to consistently deliver innovative products and technologies to their customers. I'm excited to now be in a position to spread the word about that innovation to the DJ community at large."

Industry Veterans Tapped for Key Rolls at Denon DJ and D&M Professional

In other personnel news, inMusic has appointed Costa Lakoumentas to oversee the newly acquired D&M Professional brands, and John Terry, who becomes the

US National Sales Manager for Denon DJ.

Lakoumentas began his pro audio career in 1981, designing sound systems for churches, schools, and recreational facilities. In 1998, he joined Mackie Designs where he led the development of the DX810 Digital Mixer along with several other installation products that made up the Mackie Industrial line. Most recently, he served as the global Senior Vice President of Marketing for Music Group where he developed over 60 new products that launched the Eurocom brand.

2014 marks John Terry's 40th anniversary as a professional DJ. Over that time, he's seen the business from every angle, as a performer, DJ equipment retailer, and national account manager for brands like Vestax and Akai Professional. Terry has most recently acted as the Sales Manager for inMusic's distribution division, working closely with specialty retailers to bring inMusic products to their customers.

"Both Costa and John bring decades of exceptionally relevant experience to their respective roles," says inMusic CEO Jack O'Donnell. "We're extremely pleased that they will be bringing their considerable skills and talents to bear in helping to define the next chapter of the Denon DJ, Denon Professional, and Marantz Professional story."



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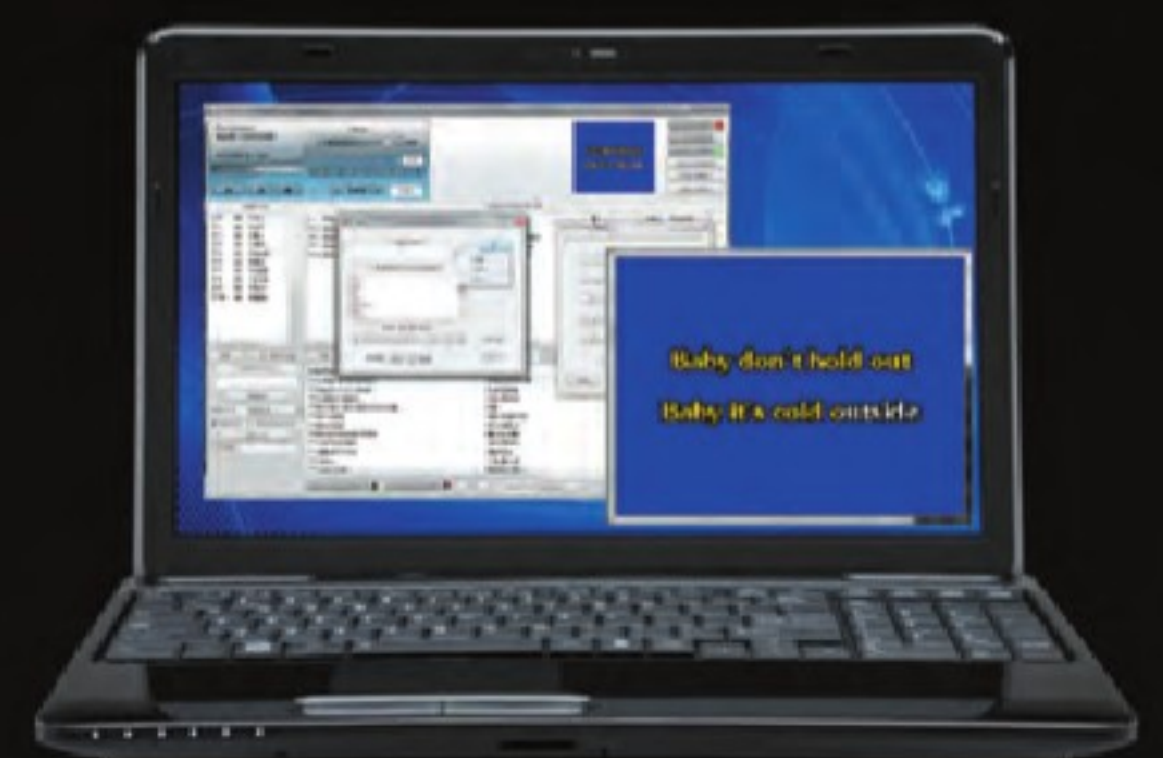
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Afford-A-Stand: For Mobile DJs on the Move

The new **Afford-A-Stand AP 360** portable DJ stand was developed to "lighten the load" of DJs on the move. Weighing just 22 lbs. (9.98 kg) and equipped with a convenient traveling bag, the stand is easy for DJs to take with them from gig to gig without weighing themselves down or taking up a lot of space in their vehicles. The stand will be available in late July, 2014.



Designed for indoor or outdoor use, the 35.5" (90 cm) high durable stand sets up quickly and features a durable, hard counter top, wrap around carpet facing, and a convenient interior shelf to store items out of sight. Each stand comes with three standard carpet colors: black, white and gray to blend with a variety of different settings. Easy to maintain, the counter can be cleaned using any standard glass or multi-purpose cleaner; and the wrap-around carpet facing is easy to clean using a hand-held vacuum.

www.affordablestands.com

CSL Rolls Out Ultra-Compact Photo Booth



For entertainers looking for an extremely compact, yet still feature-packed photo booth to add to their add-on arsenal, **Colorado Sound N' Light (CSL)** offers the **Micro Photo Booth**, their smallest, most powerful photo booth to date.

The unit measures only 16" x 16" x 6" and weighs 16 lbs. It will generate not only still photos (color or b/w) but it also creates videos as well. Photos can be printed or shared via Facebook or email.

The Micro Photo Booth features touch screen operation and green screen compatibility, and is controlled with an IBM ThinkPad Tablet running Windows 8. A Logitech C920 1080p HD 15.0-megapixel webcam with tilt adjustment captures the images, while SMD lighting is included, with three mode operation (Full-Off-Half On), to illuminate your subjects. USB and AC power connections are hidden on the rear of the unit.

www.csnl.com

JBL Adds EON612 and EON615

Featuring advanced waveguide technology and the latest in transducer design, HARMAN's **JBL Professional** is adding two new models to its EON600 Series of portable PA loudspeakers: the **EON610** 10" 2-way and the **EON612** 12" 2-way. Along with the previously introduced EON615 loudspeaker, the EON610 and EON612 deliver high-end studio monitor quality sound in a rugged, lightweight design.

The EON610 and EON612 feature built-in, 1000W power amps, along with custom JBL high and low-frequency transducers designed to deliver massive sound pressure levels with lower distortion throughout the frequency range.

The foundation of the EON600's performance is a breakthrough approach to waveguide design, solving the inherent "beaming" of conventional speaker systems that causes them to have a

different frequency response off-axis than on-axis. JBL engineers designed individual waveguides for both components that control the sound radiation at the high frequencies, the crossover point, and at the low frequencies. Special fluting is designed into the structure that guides the frequencies through the full range of the system, resulting in consistent response throughout its entire coverage pattern. The quality and consistency between on-axis and off-axis response delivers uniform coverage and high

intelligibility, which means the EON600's smooth, transparent sound is the same for the entire audience.

An iOS and Android-supported interface is paired with the Bluetooth Smart Ready 4.0 for controlling master volume, adjusting the 5-way, user-definable parametric EQ, and saving and recalling user presets.



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Youth Dance Cycles

SAME AS IT EVER WAS

By Mike Ficher

In the summer of 1957, a group of teenagers vacationing with their parents visited Studio B of WFIL at 4548 Market Street in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to appear on the soon-to-be national edition of *American Bandstand*.

In their virtual carry-on luggage, they brought the Bop, a dance emerging on the floors of the sock hops in Southern California. Spotted in a far end of the studio by Dick Clark doing the heretofore unknown movement, the host asked the teens to show the dance to the regulars of the increasingly popular, live, afternoon television show.

According to the book *The History of American Bandstand* by Michael Shore with Dick Clark, Pat Molitieri, Bill Cook, Bob Clayton, Justine Carrelli and a few other *Bandstand* regulars retreated to Studio A with the West Coast visitors. Thirty minutes later, exhausted, but well versed, the regulars and their new friends ignited a regional dance craze when they featured the Bop on the show, a now daily ritual enjoyed by a burgeoning coterie of Northeast teens and adults.

The basics of the Bop are simple yet demanding: Partners face each other and spring up and down in place, grinding their heels back and forth each time they land. I can attest to the physicality involved—I once danced at a corporate event with Frankie Avalon, where my partner and I did the Bop continuously for more than three minutes to an uptempo song—the calves were screaming for mercy after about two and a half-minutes!

Holding hands? Virtually impossible for more than a few moments, given the energy demanded by the dance.

AT THE HOP

After the Bop rode its life-cycle curve from inception to popularity to maturity to obscurity, the Stroll emerged as the next dance craze, again courtesy of national exposure on *American Bandstand*.

A derivative of the classic Virginia Reel,

males and females form contra lines, melodically and methodically executing a simple 12-step touch and grapevine combination while couples sashay between the lines in their coolest, most low-down, inviting fashion. Simple yet alluring—the original mating dance of the 1950s.

IT'S PONY TIME, GET UP!

Four points are critical in the popularity of the Bop and the Stroll that apply as equally today as they did in the late 1950's.

First, the movements are simple and easy to comprehend. That does not necessarily mean the movements are easy to master, but are facile to the interested and curious. With practice and passion, a basic level of success and enjoyment can be achieved. More critically, learning the dances can be fun, social and energizing.

Second, the dances became the province of the youth of the 1950s and 1960s. These dances were not the Jitterbug or Swing, inherited from their parents' generation. The Bop and the Stroll along with a myriad of other fresh movements and derivatives including the Pony, the Watusi, the Shake, the Hand Jive, the Walk, and the Hully Gully were developed and owned by teens—they were their creations and they mirrored their restless energy and suave style. They stamped their mark on the pop culture, bubbling from the bottom up instead pushed from the top down. The teens enjoyed ownership of these dances as much as they did a car.

Third, the movements could be transported via mass media to millions in moments. In the '50s, with only a few channels to view, exposure on a popular television program, such as *American Bandstand*, which was reportedly viewed by 20 million teens and adults daily, at its peak, could mean the difference between notoriety and anonymity.

As recording artist Charlie Gracie, who enjoyed a #1 pop smash with "Butterfly" in 1957—in no small part due to his appearances on *AB*—observed, "Going on *Bandstand* was like hitting a home run with the bases loaded."

Fourth, disc jockeys and promoters could attract interest—and money—by

featuring or leveraging the popularity of artists and dances at their events. What '50s record hop was complete without the socially binding experiences of the Bunny Hop, the Circle Dance and the Stroll? What 1970s disco ball was complete without the Hustle? Or, a 1980s shindig without an Electric Slide or two or three?

Promoters and entertainers generally gravitate to what is popular and mainstream in what can become a self-perpetuating cycle until saturation renders eyes seeking the next hot trend.

IT'S MADISON TIME, HIT IT!

Why do such dances become popular? Certainly, the four points offered above are critical whether the medium is the rise of television in the 1950s or today's pervasive presence and ready access to social media, video, texting and the Internet.

Yet something more needs to happen. The Twist was not all the rage in the early 1960s, the Hustle did not trip the light fantastic under the mirrored balls in the 1970s, and the Electric Slide did not dominate the dance floors of the 1980s without something more. Yes, all are simple. Yes, the dances started out under the ownership of the young. Yes, the media helped spread the movement.

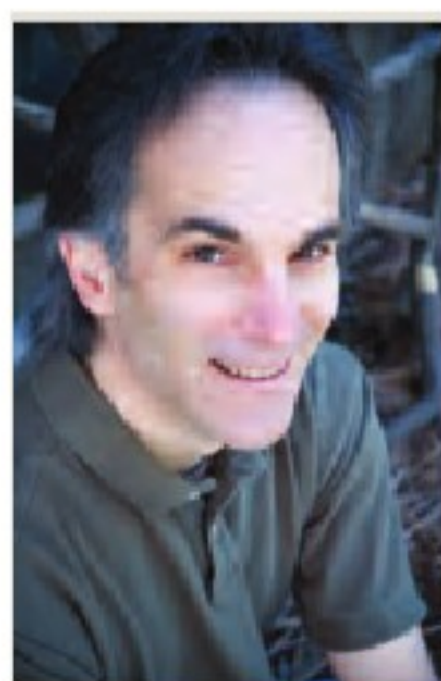
But if that was all that was needed, the Ketchup Dance would have been the early hit of the millennium.

No, something more needs to happen. Something, perhaps, unexplainable. Something that compels many to want to be a part of something bigger than themselves. Something that makes the Macarena the thing to do, that makes the Harlem Shake the happening movement, that renders the Wobble irresistible.

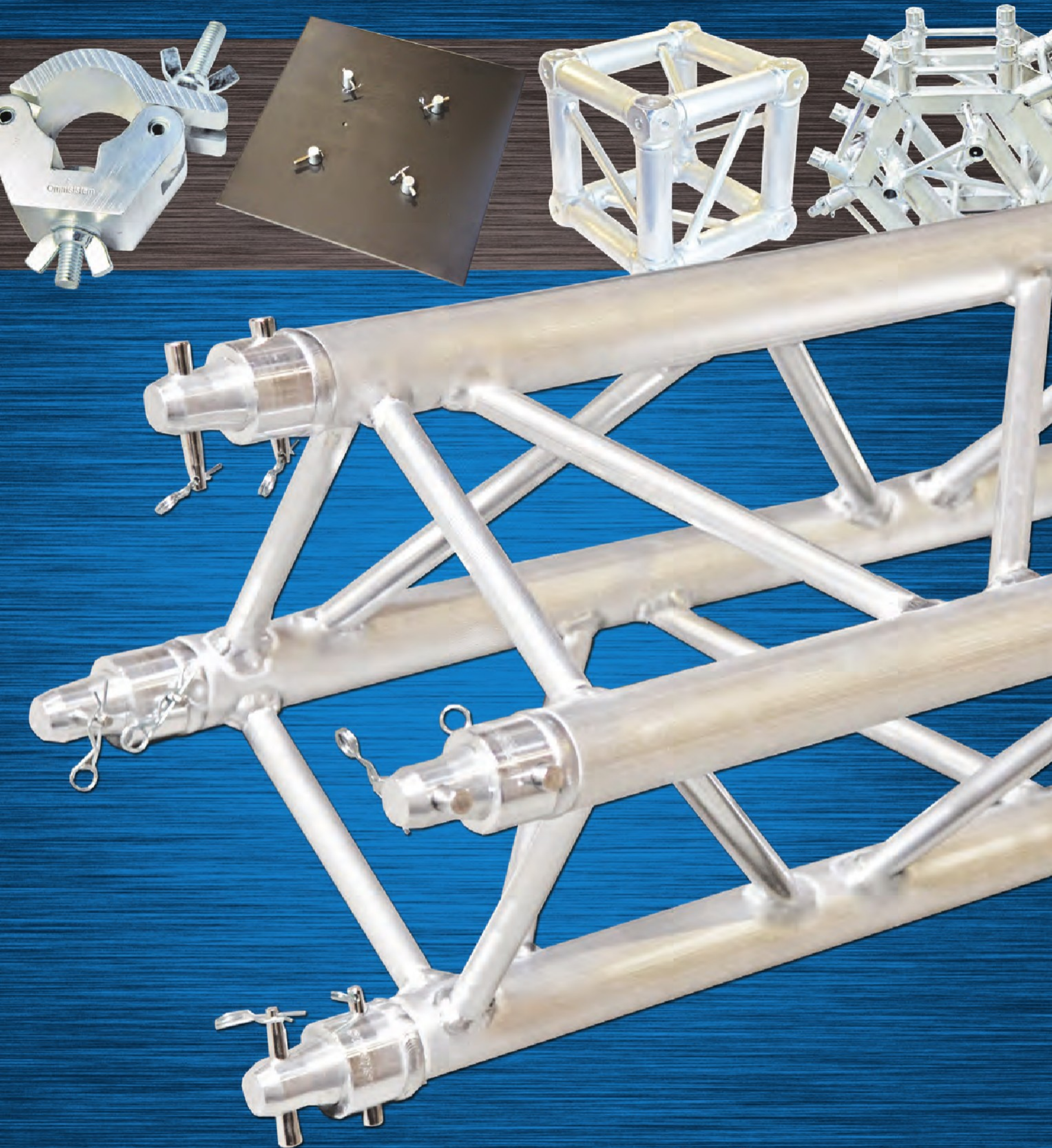
Maybe what the French so eloquently phrase as "je ne sais quoi," which literally translates to "I know not what" and is succinctly defined as "something that cannot be adequately described or expressed."

Oh, we, particularly as mobile entertainers, would like to think we know what makes something successful or popular, but the reality is, as sociologists and psychologists continue to probe, study and analyze, we are often left as baffled by the popular as the unpopular, by the successful as the unsuccessful.

We know some common denominators exist. But, can those fully explain the popularity of the Twist? Or the Harlem Shake? Or the Cupid Shuffle? Hmmmm... might be time to take a little vacation. **ME**



A business analyst by day, Mike Ficher is an actor, voice artist, MC, sportscaster, public address announcer and former mobile entertainer. He is also the host of the weekly syndicated radio program, *The Ultimate Oldies Show*. Mike synthesizes these varied experiences to illuminate historic connectivity and fresh perspectives on the mobile entertainment profession. More info at mikeficher.com.



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Kids and Warm, Weekday Fun

EXPLORING SUMMER ENTERTAINMENT FOR KIDS

By Rob Peters and Keith Alan

As the newest contributors to Mobile Beat, we are proud to be able to share information about "midweek money" with you. We hope the information we provide helps you build and develop your DJ business, and creates additional revenue for you!

Summer can be a profitable midweek season for mobile DJs, especially if you like KIDS! The warm summer weather usually can bring about some good midweek money. However, to be profitable, you need to look at more than "just playing music." After all, entertaining kids and at the family-friendly events we will discuss in this article involves being MORE than a DJ: You need to be an entertaining personality. Even with a mixed audience of kids and adults, you will find that the kids are the ones that respond the most to you, and the adults generally enjoy watching their kids have fun!

Before sharing some information about how to generate some weekday revenue with kids' entertainment, here are some important tips to help you become successful:

MORE THAN MUSIC

Whether it's a camp, school event or a kid's birthday party, you should be doing more than just playing music. If your intention is to just play music, you are going to find that the kids will get bored rather quickly. On the other hand, having too much going on will wear the kids—and you—out!

Speaking of music, make sure you are using CLEAN versions of today's music, and use your head when it comes to music that

is appropriate for the audience you are performing for. If you use some of the popular music subscription services such as Prime Cuts, ERG or Promo Only you probably receive clean language edits of today's music. However, there's rarely any indication about whether a song is appropriate for a younger audience. One suggestion is to listen to radio stations and music that appeal to young children, such as Radio Disney, or the Kidz Bop Music series. In fact, if you are looking for cover versions of today's hottest songs that are recorded with appropriate lyrics, the Kidz Bop music series is perfect; plus children can relate to these versions because each song is sung by kids.

PLAN IT OUT

Believe it or not, performing for kids can be easy and fun—IF you put together a format that allows the kids to experience a variety of interactivity throughout the event. Plan out your event and space out the different activities throughout the event so that there is a little bit of entertainment that appeals to everyone you are entertaining.

Kids have a very short attention span and having too much of one particular aspect of entertainment can cause boredom among your audience. For example, playing five or six songs in a row without including a game or interactive dance can cause a loss of interest. On the other hand, having too many interactive games or dances in a row can tire your audience out, especially if it is a game where the kids can be eliminated. If a child is eliminated early, they have to wait for the rest of the activity in order to become involved or engaged again.



CLASSIC TUNES				
THE BUSBY AND THE MASTER MURKINS - SPRING THE MOOD	SHANIA TWIN - HAVIN' A PARTY	BRITTANY SPEARS - TOXIC	LIL JON - GET LOW	USHER - YEAH
DIAMOND RIO - ONE MORE DAY	GEORGIA SATELLITES - CHANGE IN MY POCKET	HOUND DOG - ELVIS	UNCHAINED MELODY - MELISSA	RIGHT THUR - CHINGY
FRANKIE CARLE - MISSOURI WALTZ	U GOT IT BAD - USHER	VAN MORRISON - BROWN EYED GIRL	PLEASE REMEMBER ME - TIM MCGRAW	HEY BABY - NO DOUBT W/BOUNTY KILLER
PAINTED - SOFT ELL	ANGEL - SHAGGY	50 CENT - CANDY SHOP (EDITED VERSION)	JAMES BROWN - I FEEL GOOD	PAT BENETAR - HIT ME WITH YOUR BEST SHOT
Y EYE USE - TOWN	SHOUT - OTIS DAY	COWBOY JUNKIES - RIVER WALTZ	WHENEVER, WHEREEVER - SHAKIRA	GEORGE CHAMBERS - BUNNY HOP

CLASSIC TUNES				
DIAMOND RIO - ONE MORE DAY	U GOT IT BAD - USHER	VAN MORRISON - BROWN EYED GIRL	PLEASE REMEMBER ME - TIM MCGRAW	HEY BABY - NO DOUBT W/BOUNTY KILLER
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Y EYE USE - TOWN	SHOUT - OTIS DAY	COWBOY JUNKIES - RIVER WALTZ	WHENEVER, WHEREEVER - SHAKIRA	GEORGE CHAMBERS - BUNNY HOP

CLASSIC TUNES				
IN DA CLUB - 50 CENT	ALISON KRAUSE - WHEN YOU SAY NOTHING AT ALL	BEE GEES - STAYIN' ALIVE	PAT BENETAR - HIT ME WITH YOUR BEST SHOT	THE DAY THE MUSIC DIED (JAMES BROWN)
DJ OTZI - HEY BABY	GWEN STEFANI - IF I WAS A RICH GIRL	THE DAY THE MUSIC DIED (JAMES BROWN)	NEIL DIAMOND - SWEET CAROLINE	QUAD CITY DJ'S - COME ON RIDE IT
LOS DEL RIO - MACARINA	TRAVIS TRITT - BEST OF INTENTIONS	CHEAP TRICK - I WANT YOU TO WANT ME	NELLY - HOT IN HERE	CHUBBY CHECKER
EVANESCEN CE - MY IMMORTAL	VILLAGE PEOPLE - YMCA	COWBOY JUNKIES - RIVER WALTZ	YING YANG TWIN - SALT SHAKER	CHUCK BERRY - NO DOUBT - HELLO GOOD (JAMES BROWN)
		JAMES BROWN - I FEEL GOOD	52 TAINTED LOVE - SOFT CELL	I WILL SURVIVE - I WILL

CLASSIC TUNES				
LOS DEL RIO - MACARINA	AMAZED - LONESTAR	JOHN DENVER - THANK GOD I'M A COUNTRY BOY	CHUBBY CHECKER	QUAD CITY DJ'S - COME ON RIDE IT
MICHAEL JACKSON - BILLY JEAN	HOUSE OF PAIN - JUMP	CHUCK BERRY - NO DOUBT - HELLO GOOD (JAMES BROWN)	I WILL SURVIVE - I WILL	
SIMON AND GARFUNKLE - CECILIA	GWEN STEFANI - IF I WAS A RICH GIRL	HARD DAY'S NIGHT - BEATLES	THE WAY YOU LOOK TONIGHT - FRANK SINATRA	NELLY - HOT IN HERE
NEIL DIAMOND - SWEET CAROLINE	MAGIC STICK - 50 CENT	UNBELIEVAB LE - EMF	AMAZED - LONESTAR	HERO - ENRIQUE IGLESIAS
EVANESCEN CE - MY IMMORTAL	ROLL	REDNEX - COTTON EYED JOE	BEATLES - TWIST AND SHOUT	SUMMER OF '69 ... BRIAN ADAMS

CLASSIC TUNES				
POUR SOME SUGAR ON ME - DEF LEOPARD	B-52'S - LOVE SHACK	TRAVIS TRITT - BEST OF INTENTIONS	U GOT IT BAD - USHER	HOUND DOG - ELVIS
SHOUT - OTIS DAY	BLUE SUEDE SHOES - ELVIS	NO DOUBT - HELLO GOOD (KEEP ON DANCING)	JOHN DENVER - THANK GOD I'M A COUNTRY BOY	SIR MIX A LOT - BABY GOT BACK (I LIKE BIG BUTTS)
NELLY - HOT IN HERE	STROKIN' - CLARENCE CARTER	RIGHT THUR - CHINGY	ABBA - DANCING QUEEN	ELECTRIC BOOGIE (SLIDE)... MARCIA GRIFFITHS
THE WAY YOU LOOK TONIGHT - FRANK SINATRA	MC HAMMER - CAN'T TOUCH THIS	COWBOY JUNKIES - RIVER WALTZ	CIARA - GOODIES	
WITHOUT ME - EMINEM	COWBOY - KID ROCK	VAN MORRISON - BROWN EYED GIRL	PAT BENETAR - HIT ME WITH YOUR BEST SHOT	MIAMI - WILL SMITH

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KEEP IT SIMPLE

When explaining a contest or an activity, remember to "dummy it down" a bit. You may know how the contest or activity is going to be run, but for kids, they need to understand in simple terms what is going to happen and what they need to do... in terms that THEY will understand and will be able to follow. Remember, you are dealing with YOUNG children who need to have things explained to them so that they understand it.

If you know any teachers who work in a pre-school or elementary school environment, ask them what terminology they use for certain instructions and use it yourself, so the kids will understand what they need to do.

One of the most popular pieces of advice when entertaining kids comes in a quote from Oscar Wilde: "Be Yourself. Everyone else is taken." Add some of YOU into your show to make it more personable and more passionate. If the adults at your performance see that you are passionate and involved, the more likely it will be that they will refer you to other people they know who are planning events that may require your services.

SUMMER OPPORTUNITIES

There are many opportunities that can open up during the summer to fill your midweek schedule as a mobile DJ, including camps, day care centers, campgrounds, park and recreation programs and more. Breaking into these markets does require some work and pre-planning, but they can become profitable additions to your DJ business, which can have some advantages beyond the extra revenue. With the right marketing, you can begin to generate referrals to help you fill your weekends.

Just before summer hits, most schools are planning for their end of the year activities, which sometimes can include a DJ. These shows usually take place during the last week of school, and are sponsored by the school, or a PTA/PTO. Having a variety of age-appropriate games and interactive dances, as well as the clean versions of today's music can be successful in making an impression that usually have them calling you back in the fall for the "back to school" events.

Also, when looking at the summer, look into resorts and campgrounds in your area. Most campgrounds offer entertainment for their guests throughout the summer, and usually are



looking for services such as DJs, karaoke, game shows and more. If you offer a niche in your DJ company, such as trivia, this can become a weekly booking for your business. Consider offering multiple services and giving them a "bulk rate" if they book your services on a weekly or monthly basis. Campgrounds do book their dates in advance, but even reaching out NOW can become helpful to them if they ever get caught in a

situation where they may need a DJ in an emergency.

Summer camps can also be great midweek money for DJs with services during the week. There are two different types of summer camps, overnight and day camps. Both types look for youth-oriented entertainment companies to provide services during their sessions. The right pitch to the camp director or recreation director can yield several weekly bookings.

Speaking of camps, have you heard about Campardy!? We at Keith Alan Productions in Prospect, CT spend most of our summer working at day camps throughout Connecticut. Our Campardy program is geared to the elementary school age kids (grades 1 thru 6). It combines grade appropriate game show trivia, interactive dances and teambuilding games. We have even expanded this program to include after-school enrichment programs, school events and more.

At Rob Peters Entertainment, we spend most of our summer performing Bubble Parties. Our bubble party concept is a program that was developed to entertain children from ages 3 to 7 years old. It is an outdoor show that includes kid friendly music, interactivity and hundreds of bubbles. We perform at day care centers, camps, outdoor festivals, and community events throughout our area. Over the past eight years, we have found that by providing a quality service for this clientele, 75% of our clients for these shows book EVERY year. In fact, doing these shows fills our weekday schedule, and has helped RPE expand by adding and booking kid's entertainment services such as magicians, face painters, balloon twisters and more.

Being kid friendly and a kid's entertainer go hand in hand, but you do not have to be a kid's entertainer to be kid friendly at your events. Remember: "Don't strive to be the best at what you do... be the ONLY one who does what YOU do!" – Jerry Garcia. **MB**



Keith Alan has been in the DJ biz since 1975, started hosting weddings in 1982 and went full-time in 1993. While personally hosting over 60 weddings a year on the weekends, his mid-week programs generate income through out the year. Young children and seniors are the strong points of the business. Outside of the weddings division of Keith Alan Productions, Keith's summer program, Campardy™ has grown from 1 event in 2000, to 75 events within a 6 week window! Keith is busy with game shows, trivia, photo booths and extreme bingo the other 46 weeks of the year.



For over 25 years, Rob Peters has been entertaining audiences of all ages, from weddings to corporate events, kids parties and more. Rob started DJing in 1987 and went full time in 1998. He began doing kids' events in 2006, and now performs for over 100 weekday kids' parties each summer. He is the co-owner of Rob Peters Entertainment in Braintree, MA, and runs Bubble Parties, a business program that helps DJs increase their youth event revenue. Rob has been a presenter on a variety of topics for mobile DJs and is the author of **The Business Of Mobile DJing** from ProDJ Publishing.



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The Importance of Building Rapport

EVENT SUCCESS DEPENDS UPON CONNECTION

By Arnoldo Offermann

Photo by Arnoldo Offermann

The toughest part about performing at a school dance is building rapport with students. I've written about this before in one way or another, but it never hurts to revisit it. After all, the entire success of the dance depends NOT on whether the students liked the music or not, but whether they liked YOU or not. I have done MANY dances where I felt my performance wasn't the best. It's a hard thing to admit, but we've all been there. Yet even when after the dance I think "damn, this was not my night" I still get students and admin who tell me it was the best dance ever.

I've done dances where the point was to play TERRIBLE music (backwards Prom = MORP) and they still had a great time.

Why is that? Why am I telling you that music doesn't matter? Because this is the one aspect where school dances ARE JUST LIKE EVERY OTHER DANCE: Rapport means everything. The difficulty comes in establishing said rapport with HUNDREDS of students, all with different personali-

ties. This isn't quite the same as building rapport with a bride and groom or CEO of a company. The first thing to understand is their perspective of US.

To them, you are not a "polished entertainer with blah-blah years of experience." They don't care about how many YouTube videos you've watched or been in. They don't care about any MC programs you've taken; and they don't care that

you went to a trade show to further your education. To them you're the DJ. That's not a bad thing at all (remember my article on this?) and you need to embrace it. You are there to rock their faces off.

Students walk in and sit down, or maybe stand on the sidelines. Many wait for a crowd to form, and some just wait for a reason to get on the floor. No matter what they choose to do, they are all doing



one thing in unison: judging every move you make...even if subconsciously. I make it a point to remind them to grab some food, put shoes away, come grab glow-sticks, or tweet me a request. I want them to know right away who I am and what I'm here to do: DJCraziAce to rock their faces. I always play upbeat and well-known songs in the beginning, but never a huge banger. I will do a few of "yesterday's top hits" such as "Thrift Shop," "Mercy," or "Clarity." These songs are very popular and will get people dancing, but they're no longer in the main rotation of heavy-hitters. They help me spread the message that we don't mess around when it comes to music.

When they walk in the room, the should immediately jam out. Even if they

don't dance, they should be ready to turn up. If you accomplished this, you've built the first stage of rapport, which means once they trust you, they'll be OK with you playing genres for everyone.

Are you on the mic? Are you any good? Remember if you're not comfortable being cool on the mic, don't do it—hire an MC. You NEED to have someone on the mic. This isn't an option; everyone has a hypeman. If DJ Jazzy Jeff doesn't go on stage without an MC, neither should you. Heck, even rappers have an MC/hypeman with them. The art of hyping up the music is SO important. Get the students comfortable with you and establish your presence in the room with a good mic routine. (I discuss this in my videos. Thus endeth the shameless plug) Once you get students excited about what you're doing with the music, you'll have them eating out of the palm of your hand; you're no longer just the DJ, you're the star of the show.

Sounds like pure ego, huh? Well, yeah, and that's how it needs to be...You want pure crowd control? You want 100% rapport? Then BE the reason they loved the dance!

This only builds mass rapport and helps shape groupthink to your benefit. When someone requests a song, use that time to build personal rapport. There are two ways this should go:

Student: Can you play "No Hands" by Waka Flocka?

DJ: Most def, bro...that's my jam.
OR

Student: Can you play "Closer" by Nine Inch Nails?

DJ: There's only so far I can push music, you know what would happen if I play that, right?

Student: Ah man, true. How about instead?

These are not hypothetical scenarios. I have had requests for NIN many times. I'm honest and upfront about why I can't play it and every time they're cool about it. Consider this scenario that's also happened before:

Student: Can you play... ?

DJ: I'm almost out of time and still have a huge list to get through...I'll do my best, but please don't be mad if I can't get to it. But I'll try!

Student: That's cool Mr. DJ. Thank you!

Why do students get so quick about saying the DJ sucked? Because they were expecting a song to be played and they didn't know the DJ. I have now established that I can't play every song (however, if I say I'll play it, I will) AND they know who I am by one-on-one interaction plus microphone tactics.

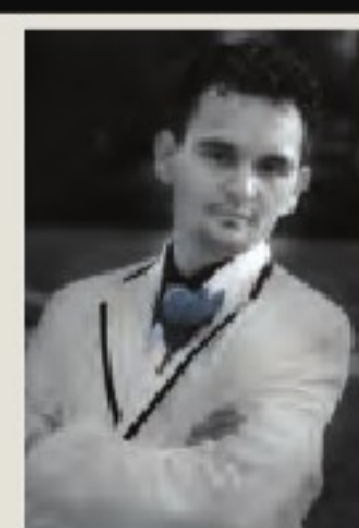
I also want them to REMEMBER who I am, which leads us to social media. I encourage an official hashtag for each school dance and often push my Twitter handle. I encourage LOTS of requests to go this way instead. Why? Thanks to the retweet function, as I build rapport with one students, their friends are seeing it, too. Imagine when you went clubbing, how it would have been to send a message to the DJ and get a reply back WHILE HE'S SPINNING? There's an instant gratification factor that cannot be accomplished any other way. I also push my Instagram as a source of photos and videos for them to get a unique perspective of the dance.

The social media rapport builds AFTER the dance. I go into a serious stalk mode to find comments about the dance and see what people thought. I retweet tweets about the dance with a "Thank you," and "Hope you had a great time."

It pays off when they remember you for their grad party, other school dance, or a wedding in the future. It pays off even more when they see that I'm doing another school's dance and they tell their friends there that it'll be the best dance ever. Now I have rapport BEFORE the dance even begins. It's a perpetual cycle that will get easier and easier as you do it more and more. Building rapport is crucial to a great dance AND future business. All this and it cost me \$0 up front.

You can't beat that price. **MB**

Arnoldo Offermann is the creator of the video series **Master School Dances** and author of **R U Rockin' with the Best?! He has helped DJs worldwide become market leaders in school dances. In a soft economy flooded with \$500 school dance DJs, Arnoldo enjoys watching 4SchoolsOnly yield dances of 10-20x that price tag. Learn more about his wildly successful series packed with ideas that actually work at www.MasterSchoolDances.com.**



Getting What You're Worth: School Edition

APPLYING MARK FERRELL'S WEDDING WISDOM TO THE YOUTH MARKET

By Marc Andrews

Listening to the *Getting What You're Worth* CDs* by Mark Ferrell, and considering what he has done for the DJ industry since 1996, I keep thinking about all of the DJs in the wedding industry that have benefitted from his philosophy on being a wedding DJ. But at the same time, the largest category for DJ events across the country beyond weddings is school dances. While not quite the once-in-a-lifetime event that a wedding is, these are still milestone events for many of the attendees, especially the senior prom.

To truly understand "getting what you're worth," you really need to hear Mark explain it in person, or at least listen to a recording of him presenting his career-changing idea. But for the sake of this article, I'll summarize it here, then put a school DJ spin on it.

REALIZING AND BELIEVING

It all starts out with realizing and believing that you are worth more. DJs need to understand how important their tasks of entertaining and facilitating the festivities at wedding a reception really are. They need to realize that they aren't just pressing play on songs every five minutes; at different times they wear the hat of music programmer, MC, event coordinator, sound and lighting technician, and many others, all under the job description of "DJ."

But before you can ask for more money for doing your job, you have to believe in yourself to know that you are worth more—more than "a veggie platter," as Mark makes the comparison to another typical part of many receptions. In some markets, a veggie platter or a cheese and cracker tray (of significant size, for a wedding) can cost \$500 to \$600—simply for the wedding couple to have for their guests to snack on before the main meal. Originally Mark determined that

case, the school dance committee or principal. You need to communicate that, short of the facility where the event is happening, you are the only other element that is necessary for a successful prom or whatever event you are pitching. In short, you need to communicate the true worth of the DJ.

With an average ticket to a prom in my area costing \$30, and average attendance being around 300 for smaller schools, the typical overall budget is \$6,000. Some of the larger schools we work with have 1,500 in attendance and charge \$40, so they have budgets of over \$50,000. So what is the DJ worth? In my company's case prom packages ranged from \$750 to \$5,000 this year, with dance sizes at both ends of the spectrum.

BEING

The final stage is where you have to actually BE worth what you are asking. As Mark says, "It's primarily about ethics and doing what you say you'll do. It's about integrity." Simply put, you must live up to what the client expects from you and then go beyond their expectations. Acting this out spans the gamut from the big things like a clean, early (not just "on time") set up, to seemingly smaller things as simple as mastering name pronunciations or being prepared with backup equipment.

So how do you do this specifically as a school dance DJ?

Yes, you need to contract the job and talk with the advisor/principal ahead of time, but you also need to meet with the committee, communicate about requests and music choices, find out about dance themes—in other words, make this more than just another "gig," in your own mind, as well as your client's. You need to make it an "experience."

But as you work to make it an unforgettable experience for the kids, never lose sight of what you really ARE worth. Another

Don't miss the return of Mark Ferrell as part of the new, reimagined Mobile Beat Las Vegas Experience coming up in February.

DJs are worth at \$1,200—but that was back in the late '90s.

In the school market, believing that you are worth more than the snacks and decorations is part of that first step. To BE worth the premium fee you'd like to charge, you must have the skills to move the crowd the way you want and that your client wants. Continuing to improve your skills at mixing and MCing is paramount. Yes, having the latest and greatest pieces of gear is also important, but in the end, they are just the tools you use to do the gig. YOU are the key to a successful event, so YOU are what is worth more.

COMMUNICATING

Next, you get to the stage of communicating this importance to the potential clients. This is the tougher part, but once you realize and believe, it's much easier to sell this to the client, in this

comparison Mark makes is between what a typical hotel charges simply for sound system rental (\$800 to \$900 for a room of 200 people) and what many DJs will charge for an entire event full of hosting, music programming, coordination, etc. As Mark puts it, "There are too many DJs who don't even charge what a hotel charges for a sound system."

So are you just a bargain-basement \$300 school dance DJ? Or are you commanding what you are truly worth, like the many other school dance DJ companies that have taken Mark Ferrell's advice to heart and have applied it to the youth event market—and are getting anywhere from \$2,000 to \$10,000 to bring the prom experience to their local schools? Start by Realizing and Believing that you are worth it, then follow through with Communicating and Being. You are worth it! **MB**

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Don't Worry, Be Happy

SATISFYING BOTH THE STUDENTS AND THE ADULTS RESPONSIBLE FOR THEM

By Marc Andrews

The subtitle of this article expresses the ultimate recipe for happiness at a school dance. If you can please both audiences at a school dance, you are set for years of service to that school. But it is certainly tough to do. This is the story about how my company did it this year, for one of our regular school clients.

It's a small town school that has done business with us for a number of years. They average 200 to 250 students at a typical dance. In the last few years the administration has gotten tighter on what they feel is inappropriate dancing; honestly I agree with their perspective, as I have kids in this age group. But, of course, during this same period of time, the music gone more strongly into inappropriate territory—and, of course that's what the students want hear. Somehow, I have to please the adults

PREPARATION FOR THIS YEAR

After securing the date and assuring the school advisor in charge of the prom committee and the principal that we could make this work for both the students and the teachers, we got to work on our plan. Although some of it took shape on the fly as different needs arose, here is how it turned out.

Late February: Suggested we take requests from the students in advance, giving them a vote in what they wanted played at their prom. We tested out the guest request system from DJ Intelligence (www.djintelligence.com) for this application, and let the advisor and the principal play with it. (This system is also standard on other DJ management platforms.)

Early March: We showed the student committee the system and discussed their dissatisfaction with the previous year's dance. The committee agreed with our conclusions, but



and the kids, as I do my job of playing music, motivating the crowd to have fun and working with the school to everyone's benefit.

LAST YEAR

Last year's dance went very well in the administration's view; yet the students were not happy at all. I was there while one of our other DJs did the primary event with no special prep other than normal. While we played a lot of current tracks and a good mix of older songs, we had to break into the songs several times to separate the students from each other; not due to moshing, but grinding.

Believe it or not, there was even talk of some parents holding their own alternative prom, because of the students being disappointed at NOT being able to grind. These parents either don't care or don't know the real reason for the students dissatisfaction. So, while we were assured of the renewal on the annual contract for prom, we knew we needed to do something different next time.

since such committees attract the better students, they were more understanding than the overall group vibe of the event. The advisor then gave them the link and asked them to vote and talk with the other students about their opinions on the songs. We have given the students a vote—and empowerment is important, even when they don't take full advantage of it. The system only receives a total of 150 requests; the chart below shows the songs (chosen by a minimum of two people):

1. EARTH WIND AND FIRE - SEPTEMBER
2. KENNY LOGGINS - FOOTLOOSE
3. ONE DIRECTION - BEST SONG EVER
4. ABBA - DANCING QUEEN
5. AC-DC - YOU SHOOK ME ALL NIGHT LONG
6. B52'S - LOVE SHACK
7. ELTON JOHN - BENNIE AND THE JETS
8. JOURNEY - DON'T STOP BELIEVIN'

9. QUEEN - BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY
10. 50 CENT - CANDY SHOP
11. BEYONCE - SINGLE LADIES (PUT A RING ON IT)
12. CHRIS BROWN F. LIL WAYNE & FRENCH MONTANA - LOYAL
13. DEF LEPPARD - POUR SOME SUGAR ON ME
14. FRANK SINATRA - THE WAY YOU LOOK TONIGHT
15. J. DASH - WOP

April: A week before the dance we went through the music with the advisor and the principal and, as expected, the students wanted a strong mix of all kinds of music. We went through the standard songs that we expected to play at most of our proms that season (prepared the week before the season starts) and assured them that our mixes are all "radio edits" and that they won't hear any curse words coming out of the speakers from us, but that some students may say them anyway.

THE PROM

Play list in hand from the students guest request system, along with a play list from the head company DJ highlighting which songs may be questionable and lead to grinding, we bring in our full DJ rig and prepare for the night.

This year's DJ for the prom is newer to the company but knows some of the students and teachers because he graduated from the school district 8-10 years previously. So he

has a distinct advantage as compared with other DJs both in general and even within our company. I am again watching over the event from the sidelines, as I'm involved in the after-prom event as a game show host in another part of the building.

He does an amazing job in the end, keeping the crowd going, playing requests and responding to instructions from the principal. He predicts needed changes to keep the students satisfied. In the end, we played probably 80-90% of so of the same music we had played the year before, bringing in some of the newer tracks and letting others go unplayed, but our DJ played them in a better order with a better mix, and worked with the advisor and principal at moving the night along. The student vibe after the dance was dramatically better. More students stayed to the end of the dance and we had a full floor at the last dance.

THE RESULTS

The Facebook posts from the students echoed this vibe and the talk about the DJ on Monday at school was the exact opposite of the year before. The amazing thing is that we played mostly the same music! What matters is that we did more before the event with the students and administration and this is what gave us the great environment to work in when it came to the actual event and the results that followed. **MB**



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Top 10 Tips for MCs

PROPOSALS FOR POLISHING YOUR PRESENTATION

By Joe Bunn

I meet (and sometimes hire) a lot of aspiring DJs. Most of the time, the guys that I hire are already DJs in some capacity, whether it's for weddings, at a skating ring, or in a nightclub. But almost always, the skill that they most lack when joining our company is being a good MC. The following are some tips that I share with them—and now with you—to improve microphone technique. Here are my top 10 MCing tips (in no particular order):

10) SHUT UP

Know when to say something on the mic, and know when it's time to be quiet.

9) YOU'RE NOT CASEY KASEM

Mobile DJs are just that, they are paid to come to a gig, set up, play music and make people dance. You are NOT a radio DJ. You don't need to intro a song, tell who it's by and what year it came out. People don't care! They just want to party!

8) IT'S NOT YOUR PARTY!

Yes, we all have egos and want to be recognized for our outstanding skills. However, the event that you were hired for and PAID for, is not your personal party. You don't need to be the center of attention all the time.

7) HELP OTHERS

So by now, you might be a professional MC, but guess what? The other 99.9% of the population is terrified of that microphone. When folks come up to give a welcome, blessing or toast, help them out. It's always a good bet to whisper something like, "Hold the mic right up to your mouth" as you pass it to them. They'll appreciate that.

6) KEEP IT CLASSY

As much as you want to say something risqué during the garter removal, DON'T. You aren't nearly as funny as you think you are, and you aren't Chris Rock. There are more than likely children there or even adults that would be offended. Just let the bride and groom have their fun and be quiet (see Tip #10 again).

5) KEEP IT MOVING

About once a day, I get asked the question, "What is your style?" I always answer that our DJs are "classy but fun" and then proceed

to tell them about our style of MCing because I can tell that is really what they are getting at. I describe it as "directing traffic." In other words, we are there to make sure that there are no awkward moments between events and that the party flows all night long. Of course, we do the introductions and get people excited, but we also keep the guests informed with announcements such as "Folks, make sure you have a glass of champagne in your hand because our best man Bob is about to give his speech." Little things like this keep people on their toes, prevent guests from looking at their watches and pondering if they want to leave, and give people like Bob, along with the photographers and videographers, an appreciated heads-up.

4) BE YOURSELF

I used to have a couple of guys that worked for me who were totally different in real life vs. on the mic. They had completely normal voices in conversation, but when you handed them microphones they transformed into "Mr. Top 40 Radio" and "Mr. Strip Club." Those types of voices are good for those scenarios, but not at our events...Nobody talks like that in real life.

3) CONVERSATE

I don't even think that's a word, but what I mean is there is no need to yell at the party guests. Use a voice, tone and style that is more conversational. You'll be amazed at how much better they will listen and respond when you talk TO them vs. AT them.

2) SAY NO TO CRUTCHES

Beware of overusing certain words and phrases. A lot of DJs are really fond of the terms "Ladies and Gentlemen" or "Let's give a round of applause." Try to mix it up. A good way to check yourself

Joe Bunn is hosting The PhDJ Workshop in Raleigh, NC on Nov. 4th & 5th, 2014. Visit www.phdjworkshop.com for more information.

is to record yourself and go back and listen, CRITICALLY, the next day. At the next gig, try to mix it up a little with different phrases like "Put your hands together," "Show them some love!" or whatever feels natural.

1) THINK!

I have seen some DJs in wedding videos that have literally made me cover my face and cry. There are some really horrible DJs and MCs out there that have no business doing once-in-a-lifetime events like wedding receptions. (Many should stick to backyard barbecues.) Before you say ANYTHING on the mic, stop for a few seconds, think about what you are going to say, rehearse it once or twice in your brain, process it, and THEN go live. I've seen DJs say the most idiotic, inappropriate, insane nonsense on the microphone, just because they had no control over diarrhea of the mouth. Much audience suffering would be avoided if DJs would simply stop and think before they speak!

I hope that these tips have helped you. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or comments at info@bunndj-company.com. **MB**



DJ Joe Bunn has been rocking events for the past 26 years, 15 years full time. Starting with a couple of DJs, he rapidly grew Joe Bunn DJ Company into a multi-op business with 18 DJs, doing 700 events each year. Joe has won numerous industry awards from ISES, NACE and other wedding organizations, as well as countless "Best in Show" bridal show awards. Questions or comments? Email Joe at info@bunndjcompany.com.

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A "Brides-Eye View" of DJ Set-Ups

STEP BACK AND THINK ABOUT HOW SHE SEES YOUR GEAR

By DJ Staci Nichols

For wedding DJ set-up ideas, we typically turn to DJ sources, rather than, say, wedding sources. It's natural to seek out equipment marketed specifically to DJs or to base one's rig on those of other DJs. To be competitive in the wedding world though, the point-of-view of the bride should be considered—especially when it comes to the appearance of a DJ's set-up.

In looking through any bridal blog, what you will see are gorgeous, detailed, do-it-yourself projects, thousands of dollars of professional photography, entire sections dedicated to tablescapes and centerpieces. What didn't make the cut for publication in the bridal blog? Our prized facades, scrims, and table skirts...and other equipment made for DJs by DJs. Most wedding DJs struggle with getting in touch with the bride's perspective, and this has done some damage to our reputation as a whole.

FROM EQUIPMENT-CENTERED TO BRIDE-CENTERED

When I go to a bridal show, I do not bring my equipment. Why? Because brides don't care about my equipment. As a testament to how equipment-centered our profession tends to be, it never fails that a number of female wedding pros will come over to me at some point during the bridal show and whisper, "Finally, a wedding DJ who gets it!"

We've all also seen DJ websites that

explain the services they offer simply by listing equipment: "Package A: 4 hours, 2 speakers, corded mic. Package B: 5 hours, 2 speakers, subwoofer, wireless mic." Can you imagine a photographer's website saying, "Package A: 6 hours, Canon 6d, 24-105mm L lens?" Ridiculous!

For some reason, we DJs loving bragging about our toys and displaying them prominently. I have a 2,000W subwoofer that I'm very proud of—but brides don't care about it. Even I wouldn't want to see it in my own wedding photos.

THINKING LIKE A BRIDE

You know those goodie bags brides give us after the last dance, with a homemade scone, monogrammed votive candle, or personalized potpourri blend? It took her an entire day or longer to put those together! Yes, she spent three times longer making gift scones for everyone than researching her DJ. This is how important the details of her wedding are.

Typically, this is when we as DJs start complaining about how undervalued we are and how we must educate brides to realize that functional (i.e. having a great DJ) should be a priority over "the pretty" (i.e. having 150 bags of custom-made potpourri). Why not change how we think? We preach that our job is to make her the princess for the day, right? No one tells the princess, "Don't wear your tiara—it's not functional." This is a losing battle!

IF YOU CAN'T BEAT 'EM, JOIN 'EM

Country singer Blake Shelton sings in one of his current hits, "I like doing what she likes." Not a country fan? Take a note from Rihanna. She sings, "I want you to make me feel like I'm the only girl in the world." Now reconsider the issue of your setup's appearance with those sentiments in mind. Spend ten minutes on Style Me Pretty. Step out of the DJ world, and get inside the bride's world. This is where to get inspired as to how you should present your equipment at a wedding.

What do you see in the bride's world that you can incorporate into your DJ setup? Here are a few things I see:

- Scrap the flashing neon DJ facade for a few sections of white picket fence that you rig to fold up like an accordion for easy transport.
- Use a portable piece of vintage furniture as your "booth." Fix it up with drilled holes for your cables and small wheels for easy



mobility. Offer to re-finish it to match her wedding colors for an additional fee. Cha-ching!

- Scrap the spandex for an Etsy find that conceals your tripods (i.e. a rustic "Here Comes the Bride" sign or a tassel garland).
- Invest in a burlap "Just Married" banner that you hang from your lighting truss.
- Minimize the appearance of anything that, in her mind, looks like Radio Shack. If it's black, metal, digital, or hi-tech, do your best to conceal it. (I just bought myself a Numark N4 for my birthday and am dying for someone other than me to gawk at it's awesomeness. But that's never going to happen in the wedding world! I've accepted that.)
- Offer her free reign in decorating your area. For example, give her the dimensions of your table in case she'd like to make a custom table cloth for you that matches her other fabrics, or have her florist make two tall displays to place in front of your table or tripods.
- Remind her to order an extra accent table cloth for your table.

A la Blake Shelton, ask her what she likes: "Do you prefer to see this big truss structure and get these 8 lights or would you prefer just one light placed on each speaker stand and no truss?" Make her feel like the only girl in the world!

COMPROMISING FUNCTIONALITY FOR APPEARANCE?

Obviously, a symphony orchestra sounds better when they're not in a "pit" in front of a theater's stage. But the priority at a play is the play—not the orchestra. Nobody complains about the "compromised" sound of the orchestra in the pit. Wedding DJs, like pit orchestras, should be heard and not seen.

At my company, for example, tripods are a no-no. They're not aesthetically appealing. People trip over them. They place sound right in some unlucky person's face. I put my speakers on the ground like monitors. Sacrilege? Maybe... but "I like doing what she likes." **MB**



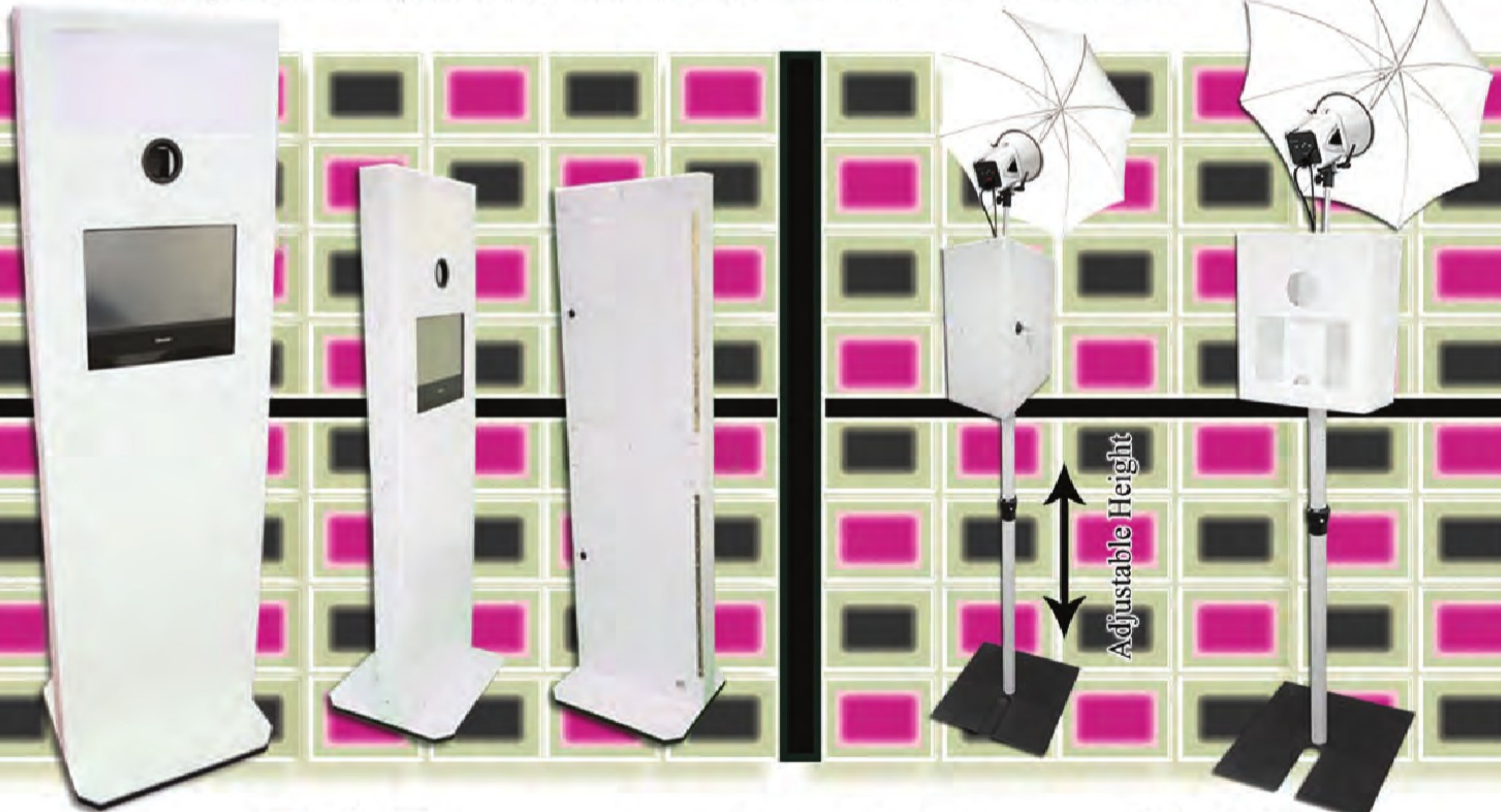
DJ and Minister Staci Nichols owns Revolution Weddings and Country Wedding DJ in southern California. Her wedding know-how has appeared on Wed Loft, Offbeat Bride, the Gig Masters Wedding Blog, and Brides Without Borders. She is available for DJ consulting with a focus on helping her male counterparts make their websites/services more bride-friendly.

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CHINO HILLS, CA

End-of-School-Year Events

EASY MONEY OR MORE TROUBLE THAN THEY'RE WORTH?

By Jay Maxwell

Many times the inspiration for my Play Something We Can Dance To articles comes from a recent event that we performed where something unique happened or helped me see part of our regular routine in a different light. This past week was one of the busiest weeks in the year for my company, as is often the case as the school year draws to a close and the wedding season is in full swing. Each year we can count on our “regular” schools to call us for their end-of-the-year parties. The term “regular” simply means that once a year these institutes of learning request our services for their final event. None of the celebrations that took place this week were proms or school dances. Instead they included a beach blast, a harbor cruise and carnival type parties. This article will explore both the reasons to undertake these types of youth events as well as the issues to consider prior to pursuing these gigs.

REASONS TO PURSUE END-OF-SCHOOL-YEAR EVENTS

1. Minimum Prep Time. Events such as wedding receptions often require an enormous amount of time preparing for the event. Multiple consultations are held beforehand, and then several more hours are spent to ensure that all the requested music is available for the event. Some brides want their first dance to be edited, shortened, or even pre-mixed with another song, which takes additional time. Fortunately, school year-end events take very little prep time. Basically if your music library includes today's popular hits, you've done most of the prep work already. The toughest part will be to make sure that the music is edited and suitable for the age group you are playing to.

2. Small Opportunity Cost. From your Economics 101 course you might recall the term “opportunity cost.” This is a cost that considers what else you could be doing at that same time or with those resources. Each end-of-school-year party last week was held in the morning and early afternoon hours. No high-priced events were going to take place at those early times and many of the activities took place in the early days of the week where we rarely book an event. This equates to a very small opportunity cost.

3. Laid-Back Atmosphere.

Compared to almost any other event, year-ending parties are relatively easy to orchestrate. For the most part, your sole job is to provide music along with a little bit of announcing, as required by the teachers to inform the students about lunch or some other activity.



Mobile Beat's resident musicologist since 1992 (issue #11), Jay Maxwell runs the multi-talent entertainment company, Jay Maxwell's Music by Request, LLC, in Charleston, South Carolina. He is also a professor of Business at Charleston Southern University. His passion for detail and continuous research of clients' requests can be found not only in this column, but also in his annually updated music guide, *Play Something We Can Dance To*.

4. Great Training Ground for New Hires. If you are a multi-system operator, this type of laid-back event provides an ideal time for to allow your newest hire the opportunity to spread his wings and fly solo. Any bumps in the road that he might encounter can usually be quickly resolved without the pressure that most events entail, such as pronouncing all the names correctly in a wedding party.

5. Better than a Walk in the Park. Although the Elementary School carnival-type parties are held on school grounds, the schools usually take the seniors on a field trip of sorts for their special occasion. This week we helped create a festive atmosphere for the one pending graduates' party just outside a beach house and another on a tour boat for a harbor cruise. While most people would gladly pay for a day at the beach or a ride on a tour boat around the harbor, we were making money with the bonus of enjoying the scenery.

6. Community Service. The difference between our regular price and the discounted price we charge is more than compensated by the community service that we are providing with our music. Part of my mission is to have a positive influence on others and providing our services at a reduced rate for these events, while delivering excellent service, is one way to fulfill that mission.

7. Smiling Faces = Personal Fulfillment. At any event where the client is happy and smiling, it should give you a sense of personal fulfillment. Of course one reason that the youth are smiling at these particular events is that they are still in school, yet are not spending the day inside the classroom. It is a day that they have looked forward to for many weeks and a day that they will remember for many years. To be a part of that memory should be one of the reasons that you take pride in being a mobile disc jockey.

8. Only Basic Equipment is Required. The setup for these events is about as simple as they come. Other than speakers, music player, mixer and a microphone, nothing else is required. Since these events are all outside, no light show, fog or bubble machine, video screens, etc. are required. This saves setup time along with wear and tear on equipment.

9. Broad Exposure for Future Events. Word-of-mouth advertising is still the best form of exposure you can generate. When these youth tell their parents what a great time they had at the event, you can count on them asking the school officials who they hired when the parents are considering hiring a DJ for their child's birthday party or graduation party, or some other event for which they need a DJ.

10. “Steady” Annual Income.

One of the biggest challenges mobile disc jockeys face is the uncertainty of future events, especially if weddings are your primary source of business.

Even if these schools hire you for only one or two events during the year, at least you can typically count on them to hire you each year.

ISSUES TO CONSIDER PRIOR TO PURSING END OF SCHOOL YEAR EVENTS

1. Longer Hours for Less Pay. Time is valuable and even though the opportunity cost is small, some DJs may rationalize that the time required is not worth the pay. Keep in mind that if you try to charge your normal fee, many schools will opt to simply put the music on a iPod and rent a speaker instead of hiring your services. Except for the two-hour harbor cruise, most of the other parties were six-hour events, longer than the standard party. More time for less pay may not make much sense, but keep in mind the idea of opportunity cost and since it is small, the benefits (beyond the monetary ones) outweigh the costs.

2. Early to Rise. The elementary school carnivals we did started when the first class bell rang. That meant that the DJ had to be ready to play music at 8:00 in the morning. Not only was this a flip-flop of the typical DJ start time from PM to AM, it could only be done by someone that didn't have a "day job." Since many mobile DJs also work a 9-to-5, it limits who can be assigned to do these events.

3. Music Choice. One of the greatest challenges of playing at any youth event is the fine line between playing the music they want to hear and playing music that does not have objectionable lyrics or content. The school sponsoring the harbor cruise solved that issue last year by creating a theme requiring us to only play music from the 1960s, which gave the event a fun atmosphere. A unique situation, but it did work surprisingly well for the boating venture.

4. Weather Conditions. For the day at the beach and the carnival style events, if it rains, then the event is postponed to a "rain date." This causes two days to be booked instead of one day which is an inconvenience, to say the least, for scheduling the DJ. We were blessed with beautiful weather for this year's events, but it is always a week of praying for clear skies and paying close attention to the forecast.

5. Damaging Environmental Elements. Per our contractual agreement with the client, a shelter must be provided for any outside event. However, even with a shelter, here in South Carolina, the temperature can get rather warm in May, which can be uncomfortable for the DJ. Perhaps worse is the proximity to the beach with the salt air and sand which could potentially damage the equipment.

Unlike a prom or school dance where the objective is to keep people dancing the entire night, the DJ's job at an end of the school year party is often more to create a festive atmosphere instead of whipping the students into a dancing frenzy. There are times when schools have other non-dance events such as beginning-of-year parties or Halloween festivals when the same opportunities and issues arise. Of course the attitude of the DJ should still be one where his professionalism shows by dressing appropriately, having a friendly personality, and actively engaging in MCing the events. Naturally, the DJ should also be flexible about music choices because there is always the possibility that sometime during the event someone will shout out, "Play Something We Can Dance To!" **MB**

Year-End Event Sample Playlist, 2014

	SONG TITLE	ARTIST
1	HAPPY	PHARRELL WILLIAMS
2	BEST DAY OF MY LIFE	AMERICAN AUTHORS
3	STAY THE NIGHT	ZEDD
4	THE MAN	ALOE BLACC
5	DROP THAT #NAENAE	WE ARE TOONZ
6	ROAR	KATY PERRY
7	ME AND MY BROKEN HEART	RIXTON
8	BEST I EVER HAD	GAVIN DEGRAW
9	COUNTING STARS	ONEREPUBLIC
10	TREASURE	BRUNO MARS
11	NA NA	TREY SONGZ
12	TURN DOWN FOR WHAT	DJ SNAKE & LIL JON
13	TIMBER	KE\$SHA / PITBULL
14	GET LUCKY	DAFT PUNK
15	BIRTHDAY	KATY PERRY
16	BLURRED LINES	ROBIN THICKE
17	BURN	ELLIE GOULDING
18	ALL NIGHT	ICONA POP
19	SHAKE	COURTNEY RAU
20	TURN UP THE NIGHT	ENRIQUE IGLESIAS
21	CAN'T HOLD US	MACKLEMORE & RYAN LEWIS
22	I LOVE IT	ICONA POP
23	BEST SONG EVER	ONE DIRECTION
24	I NEED YOUR LOVE	CALVIN HARRIS & ELLIE GOULDING
25	TALK DIRTY	JASON DERULO & 2 CHAINZ
26	CRUISE	FLORIDA GEORGIA LINE & NELLY
27	WAKE ME UP	AVICII
28	AIN'T IT FUN	PARAMORE
29	FANCY	IGGY AZALEA & CHARLI XCX
30	CLASSIC	MKTO
31	I FEEL SO ALIVE	CAPITAL KINGS
32	APPLAUSE	LADY GAGA
33	PROBLEM	ARIANA GRANDE & IGGY AZALEA
34	DARK HORSE	KATY PERRY & JUICY J
35	DEMONS	IMAGINE DRAGONS
36	STORY OF MY LIFE	ONE DIRECTION
37	MOVE	LITTLE MIX
38	SAFE AND SOUND	CAPITAL CITIES
39	DANCE WITH ME TONIGHT	OILY MURS
40	SUMMER	CALVIN HARRIS

Inside inMusic: Numark Was Only the Start

THE CORPORATE NAME IS NEWER BUT INNOVATION IS A LONG TRADITION

By Ryan Burger

It's not a name that most DJs know right off the bat; but they are surely aware of the brand names and legendary, innovative products that are part of inMusic's history. From its primary DJ brand, Numark, came the first dual CD player, the CD-5020; the DMC-1, one of the first DJ computer software controllers; the versatile, beautifully designed TTX turntable; and recent controller sensations NS6 and NS7. Not to mention the milestones from other inMusic brands, like the ADAT digital recorder and MultiMix from Alesis, or classic MPC sampling/sequencing units from Akai Professional.

(RE)MAKING A MARK

Numark formed the original core of inMusic. Beginning in 1971, it was one of the original brands specifically serving DJs by offering turntables, mixers and speakers. It made its mark in the 1980's with the world's first DJ mixer to feature a built-in sampler – the DM1775 – but languished after that. Enter Jack O'Donnell, and the genesis of inMusic. He purchased Numark in 1991 and rejuvenated the classic brand by differentiating it from all of the generic, off the shelf products that other companies were importing from Asia to sell to the growing DJ market. For ten years he focused high quality standards and custom engineering solely to the Numark brand; then came the first opportunity for expansion.

Mark Frederick, VP of Sales and Marketing, continues the story: "[Jack O'Donnell] acquired Alesis and leveraged their engineering and DSP technology for Numark to come out with some of the first digital DJ mixers. That DSP brain from Alesis allowed us to do far more with our CD player technology – ultimately allowing us to get into computer controllers. In 2005, he acquired Akai



Professional. It was a similar situation as the brand had seen better days. However, there was a 'turnaround' opportunity, so he acquired Akai Pro, which had a lot of sampling technology with its studio-standard Music Production Center, or 'MPC' line."

The acquisitions have continued since as Jack works to gather brands with different strengths under the inMusic umbrella including: AIR Music Technology (software plugin development for digital audio workstations and various other advanced software processing solutions), Alto Professional (professional loudspeakers and sound reinforcement), ION (inMusic's consumer brand), M-Audio (performance-ready studio equipment including keyboards, monitors and controllers), MixMeister (DJ mixing software), and SONiVOX (software instruments and instrument libraries). Most recently, another set of brands known for innovation in DJ gear, as well as audio in general – Denon DJ, Denon Professional

and Marantz Professional – have been brought into the fold.

THE DJ PRODUCT PROCESS

One of the keys to the Numark's success is having a real DJ as product manager. Since his hiring in 1996, Chris Roman – a mobile entertainer and club DJ for more than 30 years – has brought a DJ's eye to the engineering, development and support of every solution released. While his days at inMusic/Numark are certainly busy enough, he still takes the time for regular DJ gigs to maintain a strong connection with the profession.

Chris' "day job" is to figure out the kinds of tools DJs are looking for, develop new concepts, and bring those products to market. His aim is consistent: solutions packed with powerful features that are as fun and easy as possible for DJs to use. His experience as a mobile DJ (which includes countless wedding receptions, school dances, and more than 10 years in the clubs) has helped him consistently achieve this goal at Numark for 18 years.

"Everyone here – from the product manager to the engineers to the project managers to the product testers – we're always looking at opportunities to offer better and more innovative interfaces."



says Chris. "We ask ourselves 'where is the market going with all of this?' so we can anticipate what we think users are looking to do. DJs in general are always looking to do more with the music that is in front of them. They are looking for more ways to manipulate a track, like looping, for example. Obviously looping is track-manipulation, but how can we make it more intuitive and more fun? These are the details DJs can appreciate."

"We realize the times have changed and performing at a wedding is much more than managing the crowd in front of you. Nowadays you're doing that school dance or you're doing that prom and people expect the DJ to have that David Guetta or Afrojack x-factor. We've got to empower DJs with standout tools to create standout events."

CREATIVITY AND COLLABORATION

When Chris has an idea for a DJ solution, he will often gather a sizeable group of Numark contributors for an impromptu meeting to hash it out. Chris certainly isn't the only DJ on staff as almost everyone who works on the inMusic team is a DJ or musician. At last count at least 40 working DJs are in the building, focused on everything from testing to designing and even accounting at inMusic. These are idea people, and they are given the latitude to pursue ideas in the same entrepreneurial spirit with which Jack O'Donnell runs the company.

People from engineering, industrial design, support, quality control and more, all come together and dig into the concept. While many ideas don't see the light of day, many revolutionary ones emerge. Numark's latest incarnation, the NS7II, incorporates touch-activated knobs and Akai Pro's coveted MPC pad technology.

Alex Souppa, Director of Engineering at inMusic, explains the product development collaboration this way: "What happens is the product manager says, 'Hey, let's do this, it'll be great!' Then, the engineering guy—because he's right there when the product is being conceived—says, 'the best way to achieve what you are looking for is this way, and in addition we have this new technology in development that



you might find useful as well'. That makes for another idea...[and that develops into] a more concrete product plan. So when it's presented, it's presented as 'OK, here's what we want to make, here's how we want to make it, and here's how to get there.'"

Jonathan Hayes, VP of Design, adds, "We're there at the ground floor trying to figure out what should be where, and why. Numark likes to make innovative products,

so there are always a lot of leaps at the beginning. We need to reconcile those leaps with the way DJs actually work."

A visit to the inMusic facility reveals staff working on everything from 3D diagrams of new products, product prototypes and circuit boards to merchandising boxes. The emphasis on product development and design is clearly more intense here than at many other companies; it's easy to see how they drive the entire inMusic enterprise ever-forward. It's no wonder inMusic consistently drives the entire audio-products industry forward as well.

MANY BRANDS OF EXCITEMENT

While Numark remains the most recognizable DJ brand in the inMusic portfolio, new brands have also helped inMusic expand into totally

new areas. For example, Alto Professional was brought in to seriously impact the sound reinforcement market. While Numark had offered some basic speakers in the past, inMusic was looking for a brand name that could truly lead the charge in that realm. And in 2010, they found it in Alto Professional. Under the able leadership of Engineering Director Bernie Werner, the first two major Alto product roll-outs that had the inMusic touch were Truesonic and Black series powered speakers (recently



Numark Industry Firsts*

1989	DM1775	First DJ mixer w/ built-in sampler
1990	CD5020	First professional dual CD player
1992	CD6020	First auto-mixing CD player ("Sync Control")
1995	BEATKEEPER	First 4-source BPM analyzer w/ beat difference and offset meters
1998	CDN34	First professional dual CD player w/ anti-shock, instant start, and seamless looping
1999	CD MIX-1	First completely self-contained DJ system w/ dual CD player and mixer
2000	CDN88	First CD players w/ 100% speed/pitch adjustment, key lock, and auto mixing (sync) that really worked
2000	EM360	First DJ mixer w/ touch pad control effect processing
2001	AXIS 8	First CD player w/ MIDI control capability
2001	TTX	First turntable w/ interchangeable S and straight tone arm system
2002	AXIS 9	First digital playback unit w/ Scratch Slip control (scratch mode 3)
2002	PPD01	First 100% digital 10" scratch mixer / First DJ mixer w/ built-in digital fader effects (filter fade, chopping, etc)
2003	CDX	First tabletop CD player w/ true 12" vinyl/slipmat control and high-torque motorized platter
2004	DXM01USB	First DJ Mixer w/ USB Audio I/O
2005	iDJ	First DJ system designed for iPod users
2005	HD CD1	First dual professional hard-drive playback hardware system (w/ CD player)
2006	TTUSB	First USB turntable for converting analog tracks directly to digital files
2006	iCDX	First tabletop CD player w/ thumb drive playback, USB Computer Control (HID) and software integration (Serato/Virtual DJ)
2007	iDJ2	First iPod DJ system w/ pitch control, seamless loop, and ability to play 2 tracks off an iPod at the same time
2007	D2 Director w/ Librarian	First thumb/hard drive player system w/ computer-controllable crate management software
2008	NS7	First complete DJ controller w/ motorized platters / First controller w/ touch strip for track position
2010	iDJLive	First Core MIDI DJ controller for iPad and iPhone
2012	iDJ Pro	First fully-integrated iPad DJing system
2013	NS7II	First DJ control system w/capacitive touch knob effect control
2013	Orbit	First 16-pad wireless MIDI controller w/ built in accelerometer

* List provided by inMusic

reviewed in Mobile Beat). Look for some surprising developments in the future from the Alto brand.

ATTENTION TO DETAIL

The final factors that make the Numark equation work out are product testing, quality control and end user support. Testing takes place before manufacturing and before shipping. High priority is also given to customer support after the sale.

As Jonathan Moore, Quality Assurance Manager, explains "It's all about using the product in every way that someone could think of, including hooking it up incorrectly." He points out that while an experienced DJ would know how to connect a piece of gear, someone new to the business might not. They want the user experience to be a good one for both kinds of DJ.

Manager of Technical Support Rob Griffith expresses it this way: "We really dive deeply into the science of the customer experience at every stage of development, before and after. The cycle of customer feedback back into the design and product launch processes are a crucial part of our approach. The support team is connected into the process as the product progresses through design and feature changes."

And it isn't just about supporting whatever actual Numark product is used. It's also about supporting everything that touches their hardware. You'll find Numark staff on Serato forums, Facebook, and other online hubs of DJ activity, helping users get the most out of their gear. Internationally, Numark has support staff based in offices around the world to handle the different hours and different cultures of the DJs that they serve.

BREAKING NEWS

Just weeks before the visit to inMusic's, Cumberland, Rhode Island headquarters that brought about this article, the rumors were confirmed: The Denon DJ brand was due to be acquired by inMusic, along with its sister brands, Denon Professional and Marantz Professional.

Adam Cohen, Vice President of Business Development sheds light on this latest addition to the inMusic family: "Well, obviously Denon DJ, particularly for mobile DJs, has been a really strong brand for a long time. They've catered to that market in a pretty effective way and we intend to continue that tradition. Obviously, Numark has taken huge strides with regard to developing controllers for performance...so we thought the addition of Denon DJ would complement our existing DJ business with Numark nicely. There are technologies that Denon brings to the table, certainly technologies that Numark and the other brands bring to the table, which will inform one another and be applied for specific purposes. So we're very excited about leveraging the technologies at our disposal to strengthen both brands, while maintain the things about each that make them uniquely appealing to their respective core audiences."

Denon is the latest in a line of notable audio technology companies that have received the "Jack O'Donnell touch" as part of inMusic. If previous results are any indication, the new corporate relationship promises a bright future for the Denon brand.

The inMusic approach clearly aims to bring out the best in each of its brands, by encouraging and enabling creativity in their staff members, and leveraging the synergies of technology between them. This bodes well for the advancement of DJ technology, and by association, the DJ industry, for many years to come. **MB**

A DJ convention in November in Minnesota?



*Heading to the Disc Jockey
News Conclave in November...
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You could go to a warm location for a DJ Convention... But why bother when you can come to Minnesota, November 9-12, 2014, for one of the best educational and networking times in the industry, at the Disc Jockey News Conclave 5.0!

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MOBILE BEAT

Your local music gear retailer is still the only place you can get your hands on actual gear to try before you buy! Stores listed here typically have DJ gear-savvy sales people ready to help you make the right buying decisions. Don't miss out on what the stores have to offer!

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL GEAR STORE!

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THORNTON, CO



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WEST

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hollywooddj.com

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800-700-4542

Limelite Pro-Audio and DJ Supply

limeliteproaudio.com

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Las Vegas, NV 89102
702-364-9922

Planet DJ, Inc.

planetdj.com

1315 Greg St
Suite 101
Sparks, NV 89431
877-4DJ-Gear

Colorado Sound N' Light

csnl.com

12061 Pennsylvania St
Suite B102
Thornton, CO 80241
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MIDWEST

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Pro DJ Sound

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Chicago, IL 60625
773-961-1253

B2 Lighting FX

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816-224-0044

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proaal.com

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800-357-8991

I DJ NOW Long Island

idjnow.com

1015 Sunrise Hwy
N. Babylon, NY 11704
800-355-7746

I DJ NOW Queens

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Harding Expwy
Fresh Meadows, NY 11365
718-762-0100

Sound Source

soundsource.com

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Rochester, NY 14610
585-271-5370

Music Trends The DJ's Toystore

music Trends.com

2947 Hempstead Tpke
Levittown NY 11756
888-621-DJDJ

Electronic Bargains DJ Superstore

ebdj.com

970 Montello St
Brockton, MA 02301
800-336-1185

Stop in , or better yet, tell a friend who has not yet experienced Mobile Beat to stop in at your nearest participating DJ gear dealer, to receive a complimentary copy of MB with a product purchase.

Directly Connecting DJs and Gear

ROB KURON'S PRO AUDIO AND LIGHTING IS PLUGGED IN TO WHAT DJS NEED

By Ryan Burger

In this age of completely "virtual" storefronts competing for shoppers' eyeballs and Paypal accounts, there are still a few major retailers who maintain a serious "live" presence, with a well-stocked store and gear actually set up and ready to be tried out before buying. (Imagine that.) Pro Audio & Lighting (aka, DJS Pro Audio and Lighting, aka DJ Supply), of Warren, Michigan, has actually built a bigger and better brick and mortar presence, while also expanding their online store at www.ProAAL.com. It's all been guided by owner Rob Kuron, who also happens to be a mobile entertainer himself.

A long way from its birth in the back room of a car stereo shop back in the 1970s, the company recently moved into its current 14,540 square foot facility. It combines warehouse and retail space, providing ample room for demonstrating their many

Rob Kuron: All right...Started many years ago, working for a company; started my own company...and buying gear turned into the mainstay, which turned into this.

R B: But you've been through a couple different incarnations?

R K: Yeah. This will be the fourth move and this is what we've been working up to as the move to stay at.

R B: Tell us how you moved into the retail thing; and how long were you DJ Supply?

R K: I actually partnered up with Tim Lyons, who started DJ Supply, who actually was in the back of a garage. So the space was, whatever, 20' x 20'.

And when I came in we were pushing more of the DJ side of things, but there was no place for a DJ to go. Everybody was going to a place that sold instruments, and they might have had a piece or two, and the DJ didn't really have a place that they could call their own.

R B: This was in the late '80s?

R K: Yes. Actually it was. And now you're dating me. What we noticed is every time somebody came in the door, they were like, man, I've never seen anything like this; I'm so glad you guys are here...and then, can you get this? Will you buy this? We just kept stocking it

and stocking it and overflowed the small space we had and continued to grow from there.

R B: So the big difference I've seen is that you have the product in stock; and you have guys that work here that know the product as compared to watching a video on YouTube about how to do it.

R K: Exactly. Actually knowing the piece is cool.



product lines, and engaging customers with seminars and other in-store events.

Mobile Beat Publisher Ryan Burger spoke with Rob during a recent visit to the Detroit area.

Ryan Burger: We're here with the main man... Rob, tell us a little bit about how you got into the DJ business.



What I really like is we try to show it how you'd see it in real-world applications...

And...I stock based on what I hear, what's hot, what's needed. I don't let the manufacturer tell me what I need to stock. I really do look at and try and get stuff that makes sense, that's of quality, or that is something that really makes an effect for people.

R B: I see you offer a wide selection of speakers. So DJs can come in and check them all out?

R K: Yep. Lot of different choices from speakers, lot of different price points for speakers; guys looking for a startup or an inexpensive set, all the way to a higher quality piece. Whether it's here or something we can order in, we can definitely take care of you, and your speaker line.

And... all of this stuff works. That's the difference between us and a lot of different places. Right now I could turn on any one of the speakers we have and you can hear it, versus somebody trying to plug in wires and trying to figure out how to make something work.

R B: And from a \$60 little powered speaker up to \$1,000 cabinets.

R K: Absolutely.

R B: You also have all the other stuff people need to get their systems working readily at hand...

R K: Exactly. It was important for us to stock pretty much everything anybody needed on the last minute, but also for whatever application.

We get a ton of people that come in and say, my gosh, I've been looking for this, or I can't find it, or I needed this right angle piece and nobody else stocks it. So we do try and keep track of everything and make sure we have everybody's everything in stock.

R B: Tell us about your lighting department.

R K: Our lighting room is what I feel is one of the best parts about what we have to offer. There's not any place that I'm aware of in this area or anywhere close that you can literally walk into a room and see ALL the lights working.

It was extremely important that I have a \$60 light next to a \$1,000 light so that you can see all the different avenues of what it is...Everything in there works, and literally we

INSIDE THE INDUSTRY

take hours a week just turning things on to make sure that they work so that when you do come in you can get the full experience.

You can't do that online, okay? Every one of these lights that we have, we basically had meetings in the mornings and we turn stuff on and say, okay, what do you think of this? Well, compare it to this. So when a customer asks us a question we can definitely give them a solid answer.

R B: So you are serious about helping people get the best lights for their needs, and get the most out of them.

R K: Yeah. And we also offer training for DMX...we'll set up an area for guys to actually bring in their own controllers and lighting and show them what DMX is, how to use it.

We'll either use the boards themselves or we'll train them on software...if they want something more than that we'll customize it to what they need.



A lot of customers are still, I'd say, taken aback by DMX and thinking that they can't do it. But through the classes here they can pretty much program their own light shows and other light shows from there.

R B: And you've taken advantage of the YouTube thing to help with lighting as well, right?

R K: ...we'll bring DJs in local and allow them to spin and show off their talents, and then broadcast them on a YouTube channel or another type of channel.

R B: And you've been doing the videos for a while. I mean, I remember there was a time when someone could call up and you'd say we'll turn on a certain light for you—

R K: Sure. I think we were one of the first places that started that as far as really embracing the ability to show stuff live.

R B: What about gear repair?

R K: We have one of the best technicians in the area—I would say the best in fixing turntables, 1200s...He's able to fix the old stuff as well as the new stuff. From the many years we've been doing this we have a parts graveyard. So if you bring something in and the part's not available there's many times where he'll go up into the graveyard and say, oh, yeah, here's the part that you need and we'll be able to fix something for you that isn't fixable at other places.

R B: Anything else you'd like to say about the store?

R K: One other thing that we offer that a lot of people may not realize is rentals. You may not need a large pair of speakers for every event you do, but you might have that 400 or 500-person party and your little 12-inch speakers don't work. So we offer an extensive rental area. We can do your lighting, uplighting—we'll rent to some guys 24 uplights when they only have 12, or large speaker systems. Or maybe they need



to do a rig system or a ceremony system...

When somebody comes in and wants a pair of speakers, we'll say, what do you do most of the time? Because they always want to look at that big pair of speakers...So we tell them, look, buy what you're going to need and then if you need a subcabinet for an event or need something bigger for that two or three gigs that you might need it for you can definitely rent it. In the end you're saving money but you're also saving setup time and the weight of carrying the stuff continually.

R B: So if the DJs are interested in finding more about Pro Audio and Lighting, how can they?

R K: They can contact us at 586-582-0871 or 800-DJS-8991 or check out the website at www.proaal.com. **MB**

My How You've Grown!

DETROIT'S JASON PARENT PROGRESSES FROM A SOLO PRODJFILER INTO A FLOURISHING MULTI-SYSTEM SERVICE OPERATOR

We're catching up with an interesting disc jockey, Jason Parent, who we spoke to 11 or 12 years ago, way back in issue number 79. His business, Pro DJ Services, serving the metro Detroit area, has obviously changed since then and has grown tremendously. Back then he was a college student with a successful DJ business, but there's a lot more going on now.

Mobile Beat: Jason, tell us a little bit about yourself and how you got into this business.

Jason Parent: I started this business, like you said, back in college—actually a little prior to that, back in high school is where I got my foundation. I did my first wedding as a junior. And of course, the business has changed in the last several years and it's grown tremendously and we're doing a great operation here in Detroit, offering DJs, photo booths, and videography now. You've got to do those bundled services to cater to those brides.

M B: Looking back at your original MB story, I see you saved up your money from a car wash, lawn service, gutter cleaning service, and many other services so you could buy your first professional lighting effect. I assume you've got more than a couple of those at this point.

J P: That is correct. The equipment has changed tremendously...Of course, it's all LED now. We still CD backup, but those very rarely, rarely come out and everything's done on a laptop now.

M B: Tell us a little bit about your operation. You've got yourself, a person or two in the office. What are things like around the office?

J P: Things are great. We have an office assistant that works here in our office that does a lot of our consultations, meetings, scheduling. I do some as well.

We do roughly about 500 weddings a year now. All of our packages come with a disc jockey and a master of ceremonies. I'm very keen on having that two-person crew just for a

more professional and polished look, having the disc jockey controlling the music and the master of ceremonies to do all of the speaking roles.

M B: You're in a tough market. How do you deal with the pressure to discount?

J P: You know, you'll always have those DJs that offer a \$300, \$400, \$500 DJ package, but they're catering to a specific type of bride. They're catering to a bride that may be on a smaller budget. I mean, we also have very wealthy areas here in Detroit that have bigger budgets. So the entire spectrum of pricing can range in this market.



Our packages are starting right around \$1195 and then go up from there, depending upon photo booths, videography, custom accent lighting, monograms and things of that nature.

M B: And all the DJs are employees of yours; you own the equipment. Why did you go that direction versus what a lot of other multi-ops do, where they are just booking for other disc jockeys?

J P: I believe if you have all the DJs employed, and you treat them well, you build a good relationship and you create a family in-house.

We have one of our employees just strictly maintaining control of the gear, making sure every week that everything is set, looking professional.



When the DJs go out, they're all trained through this company as opposed to using a subcontracting idea where you're hiring multiple different services that all were trained differently and have different ideas of how a wedding should go. With us, each DJ has their own little niche and personality, but overall you're going to get a similar, professional performance and expectation from our services.

M B: So you like to find totally fresh people that are inspired and reliable that may not have DJ experience, because you want to teach them from the start.

J P: That's correct. And everyone wants to be a DJ out there and everybody knows a DJ. And even at these bridal shows we hear hundreds of times a day, oh my friend's a DJ and so-and-so's a DJ. But it takes that person with a passion to really want to be doing the DJ service. You know, anyone can play music. Actually, our tagline is "anyone can play music; we entertain" or "we don't just play music; we entertain." And that is true. That's the basis of our company.

And it's having that fresh interest in the industry out of college or someone that does love music and has passion for music, those people we can customize and tailor the way

we need them to perform; as opposed to someone that's been doing it for a while, and in their mindset they know exactly what they do. And of course, you and all the other DJs out there know the difference between a mobile DJ and a club DJ and a radio DJ. Everyone has their own little niche, but sometimes it's hard to break the DJ that does clubs into the wedding market because they have that club feel.

M B: How does business come in for your company?

J P: We use sources of marketing and advertising here. We do bridal shows. Of course we advertise on the Internet with the largest wedding websites; The Knot, The Wedding Wire. We're highly profiled on there with banner ads and whatnot—as well as great networking.

I believe in the networking with the halls, working with the halls, people in the industry; other business professionals—florists, bakers, people that can also recommend you when those brides come into their shops or their offices and they say, "Hey, do you know a good DJ?"

So between those three, that is basically how we get the majority of our business. And I also believe that those online review sites really do help build the credibility of the company. So if a bride goes into the hall that she's



booking at and they recommend us, she can look back to TheKnot.com to build that credibility of our business in her mind that, oh, they are professional, here they are, here's all their five-star reviews.

M B: During the last 10 years or so since Mobile Beat last interviewed you, what is the biggest change that has happened with your business, or with the industry in general that's had an effect on you?

J P: You know, it's funny that you ask that, just because when I started doing this I actually back in the day started with tapes. And you get that transition to CDs, and now the biggest transition I think in what I see—one of the biggest—is in regards to the music.

Now everything is done on the laptop, with the ease of playlists and the quick select of the music and the ability to actually have all of that music on hand as opposed to carrying cases and cases and cases of CDs.

The other thing I've noticed just recently, though, is the bride today wants some of that bundled service. Ten years ago she wanted the specialized videographer and the specialized DJ and whatnot; whereas today she's coming in and they're looking for more of a one-stop: "I want the DJ and photo booth combo together."

So that's something that we have branched into. I have a degree from the University of Michigan in television and radio production and communications...So now we can offer those three services in-house.

M B: You mentioned earlier consistency on equipment; tell us about your standard setup.

J P: All of our systems, we use all Denon products—the Denon MIDI interface controllers as well as a Denon mixer. We use Shure microphones. And then we use a lot of different lighting brands.

M B: How about speakers?

J P: On the speaker side, we do a mix. Some of our systems have the Mackie SRM450, the older ones, and then we also use the QSC K-12s.

M B: What else do you want readers to know about you?

J P: You know, we're really not only DJing here now. We are, like I said, doing the photo booths, the videography. Detroit's a great city. We're seeing a lot of life come back to the city and it really is a great area.

I know back several years ago we had some negative publicity in the news with Detroit being a bankrupt city and whatnot. But you know what? It's really coming back. We've got a great mayor in office and I can't wait to see what Detroit has to offer here for us. **MB**

Find out more about Jason's company at www.prodjservices.com.



Joe Bunn and Mike Walter are joining forces again to present the most comprehensive DJ program ever! Earn your DJ "Doctorate" in this intensive two day workshop.

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Black Tie DJs

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How to Move into Video

WONDERING WHERE TO START?

By Lane O'Neill, aka VJ Infiniti

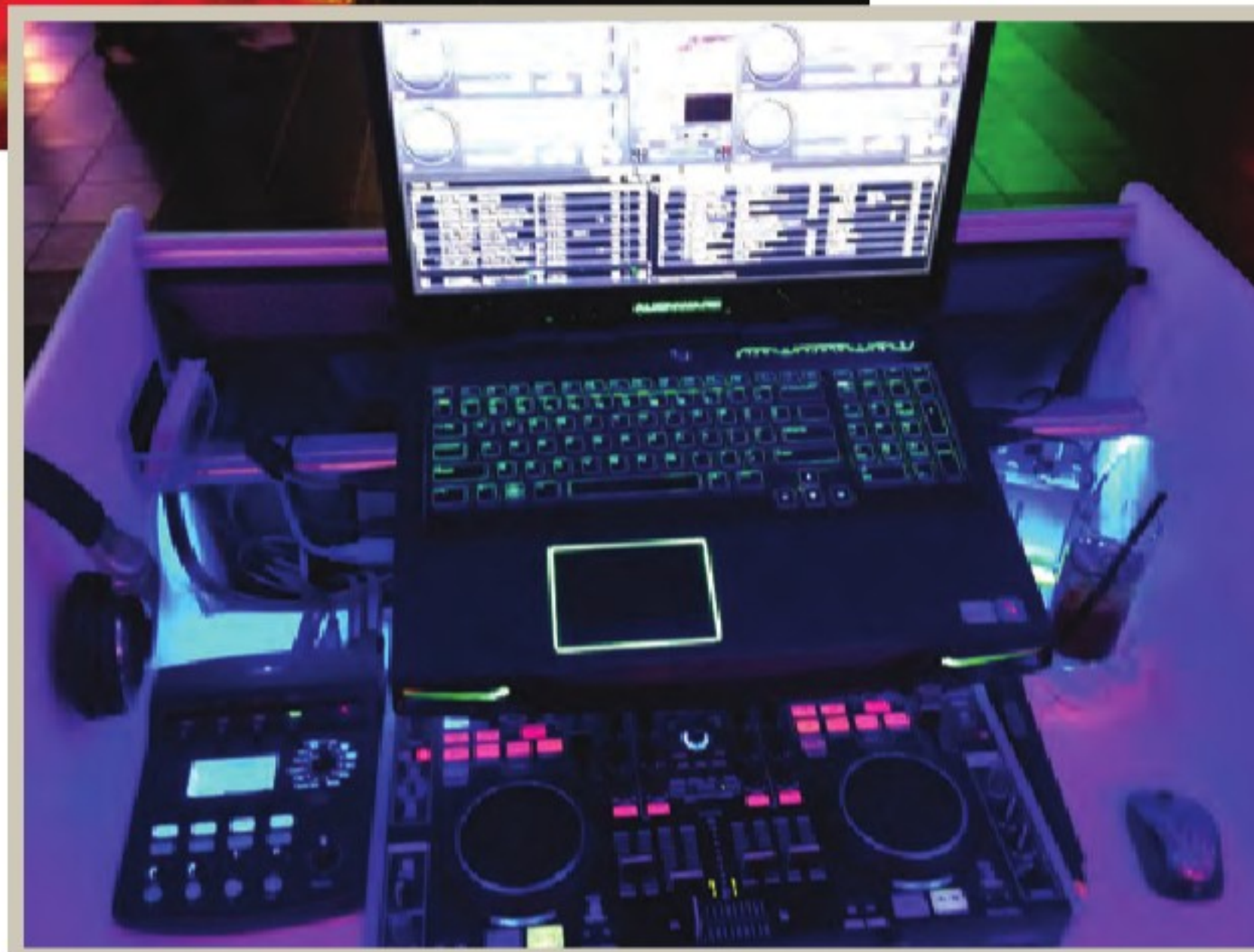
You're in luck, because now it's easier than ever to move into video. If you're a seasoned DJ still playing CDs, it's never been a better time to transition into becoming a multimedia DJ. If you're from a younger generation that grew up with YouTube (has it really been almost 10 years?), then you might have already started collecting all or some of your music in video format.

MEDIA

To get started, you'll need your media and that will mean buying a music video library. I've been a Platinum subscriber to Promo Only for more years than I want to remember and now have a dedicated computer downloading HD MP4 video files almost 24/7. Many can get by with just the Hot Video subscription, but if you truly want to expand into being a full time video jockey, I recommend you start collecting all of the MP4 genres. Services like Promo Only and Prime Cuts also offer the option to purchase an entire "music video library" sliced and diced by formats and the year released. You can shop for your '80s Retro, '90s Old School, '00s Modern Rock, or Country Love Songs (you get the idea) from your computer, and purchase either disc releases or by digital download (which I find much more convenient). Most video content is delivered in at least 480p DVD quality, and much, if not most, is now released in HD 720p. Some video content is currently released in 1080p, but not much yet.

HARDWARE

Beyond purchasing your media, you may need to buy some new equipment, such as a better computer, DJ software capable of seamless video mixes, and some type



of display for your viewers. (I never said this was going to be cheap!) I'm typing this article on an XPS M1710 PC with a 2.16 GHz Core2Duo processor, 4 GB RAM, nVidia 512 MB video card...that cost \$4,000 eight years ago. You can probably find better specs in a modern laptop for around \$400 in today's market. This computer has played music videos 150 nights/year for about 5 out of the last 8 years. Regular maintenance like cleaning the dust from the cooling fans is just as important as changing your engine's oil. Keep your laptop running cool and your laptop will run happy and for a long time.

My current video machine is an Alienware M17x R4, running Windows 7, with two video cards, a .5TB card dedicated to the notebook monitor only, and a 2TB card dedicated for video output via HDMI port. I'm also running 16 GB of RAM, an SSD internal Raid and an i7-3740 2.7 GHz (8 core) processor. I have a lot of headroom with this machine. But you don't need to spend \$4,000 in this day and age for a laptop that will slice through video mixing.

MP4 video files are large—about 10 times the file size of the corresponding MP3, so you'll probably need to invest in some additional storage. Many people

prefer external powered USB hard drives. If you have subscribed to video subscriptions for more than a decade you'll find your collection will become vast. We now have our own cloud servers that manage the data packet stream in nanoseconds. Using a cloud server gets rid of those pesky bottlenecks or hiccups commonly experienced with external USB hard drives. Using a cloud server via Ethernet cable also increases the file read/write transfer rates by several hundred percent relative to USB 2.0 standards. I highly

recommend having a server manage your data stream packets for the smoothest and best performance possible.

SOFTWARE

There are many programs, and even more controllers to choose from to manage playback and mixing all of your videos. I've used many programs through the years, but my personal favorite is Virtual DJ Pro. I personally beta-tested VDJ during the

version 6.0 release specifically for video and highly recommend the current Pro version 7.4.1.

Everybody has their own style and budget, so choosing the computer controller is as individual as the vehicle you drive every day. You "can" use computer software without a controller, but it's a lot harder and I just cannot imagine life without a controller, especially with the four-deck skin I use. I've been using the Denon MC-6000 since 2010 and have found it to be a rock solid, yet compact controller perfect for both mobile and club use.

DISPLAY

You'll also need a display to output your videos to. Most wedding DJs prefer either short throw projectors and screens or lightweight flatscreen TVs. I started out with a couple of Optoma classroom-grade 2500-lumen projectors and eventually upgraded to a couple of 4k-lumen projectors which have a bright picture even with daylight shining through the windows. Skirted screens with rear projection seem to have become the standard, and the 4:3 ratio is slowly dying out. You'll want to get a 16:9 ratio screen. I have been very happy with my reliable Screenworks EZ-fold

screens. They literally pop together in about 10 minutes without tools and can be raised or lowered in 6-inch increments (for varying ceiling heights). With a short throw projector, a 100-inch diagonal screen can be filled from only 4 feet.

An alternative to displaying video with a projector is to utilize a flat screen TV. 10 years ago, I had a Panasonic 42" 480 plasma that weighed 90 lbs. We now own a couple Sharp Aquos 60" 1080p TVs that are 60 lbs each. I purchased plasma ATA cases for safe cargo transport. To mount and display, we use 2M Global Truss Totems with 30" aluminum base plates.

Transferring video signal from your computer to your video display is now easy to do, using the popular HDMI (High Definition Multimedia Interface) cable. If you are using an older model laptop with DVI and no HDMI, you can buy an inexpensive adapter cable (that really works) from Monoprice. A single HDMI cable out from your computer to a single display is a simple setup. You can easily add additional HDMI input sources (like a video camera for streaming live video from the dance floor) and outputs (additional

displays) with an HDMI matrix switcher. Again, inexpensive switchers can be found at Monoprice for less than \$100. However, if you cannot tolerate frame drops or delay in channel switching, you might want to consider stepping up to a broadcast-quality, seamless matrix switcher like the Gefen EXT-HD-SL-444 (ballpark, \$2 Gs). There are additional products available for "dropping the wires" altogether with wireless HDMI transmitters and receivers. My mobile rig has three HDMI transmitters and 4 HDMI receivers so I can send wireless 1080p to four displays (imagine four corners of a 500 guests ballroom) 100+ feet in any direction without running cables!

GET MOVING...

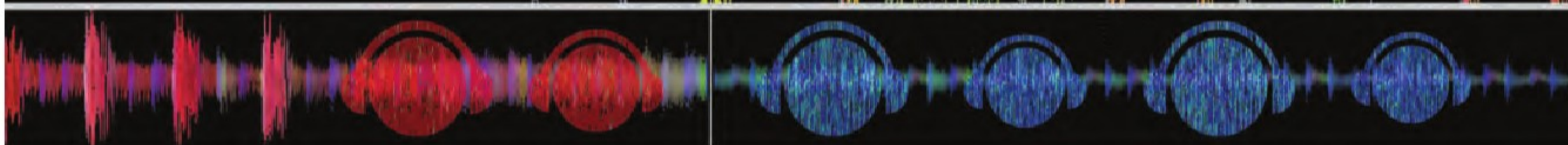
If you've been a professional "audio only" DJ, you might want to consider selecting 250 to 500 of your top-played MP3s and purchase the corresponding MP4s for a start on your video library.

Yes, the nostalgia of thumbing through record crates is long gone, but a different kind of nostalgia—that of mixing all of your favorite artists performing their famous hits in their memorable videos—is now readily available at your fingertips! **MB**

Beyond the Music: Added Visual Interest

Develop some basic skills with Photoshop and you can create stunning video "digital signage" similar to a monogram with fancy fonts. It can be as simple as "Congratulations" to providing visual cues while making announcements. These images can be displayed using your video playback software. You can use a conservative looking "monogram" design for your DJ booth digital signage and later display your music videos after the party has started rocking. With a little extra effort, you can create digital "announcements" for various events like the cake cutting or bouquet toss at wedding receptions.

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"You Are Obsolete!"

HOW WILL YOU RESPOND TO THE NEXT DJ-KILLING TREND?

By Stu Chisholm

I might be showing my age here, but few who saw the old 1961 episode of *The Twilight Zone* entitled "The Obsolete Man" forget those chilling words. In that episode, the obsolete man in question was a librarian. This, too, might strike a familiar chord with people today who mourn the loss of local libraries that have been vanishing since the advent of the Internet (along with newspapers and record shops). Indeed, technology has always changed society, making some jobs obsolete

while creating new jobs and even whole new industries in the process. But unless we're directly affected by these changes, most of us go along through life thinking that such change is inevitable and people just have to "suck it up" and move on.

SHIZZLE GETS RIZZLE

For entertainers, technology has been both friend and foe. It's made our professional lives easier and better in many ways, yet we've also been the targets of those wanting to eliminate the burden of having to pay actual people to entertain. The oldest example of this I can think of is the "player piano," which meant that a bar out in the frontier not only didn't have to pay a musician, but didn't have to hunt one down in the first place. (I'm guessing they weren't all that plentiful back then.) In the 20th Century, the advent of the jukebox was heralded as the death knell for bands, and bars and nightclubs installed them throughout the country. It soon became apparent that, once the novelty wore off, nobody was going to frequent one club over another just because

they had a jukebox. Instead, they became the "standby" music source to entertain before the band took the stage and when they took breaks. They also had the advantage of being small enough for places that didn't host bands, such as the corner malt shop/diner, pinball arcade, etc. Bands survived and thrived right alongside the jukebox.

It was technology,

however, that made the mobile DJ possible, and this soon became a problem for the bands who had long dominated the bar, nightclub and wedding scene. Prior to the mobile DJ, disc jockeys were contained within the realm of radio.

On a side note, even radio DJs weren't safe from the occasional technological potshot. It has long been possible to automate radio stations. Even before affordable computers became widespread, mechanical playback systems controlled by a master clock allowed pre-recorded announcements and music to be played by machines. Yet almost without exception, such schemes failed wherever they were tried. When surveyed, it was found that people didn't tune into their favorite stations just for the music, which could be found on several locations along the dial. What people enjoyed was an on-air "friend"—a familiar voice they've come to know and trust—who shared their love of the music and acted as a guide along the way. Many stations spent thousands of dollars on automation only to bring back their cadre of DJs (known as air staff or air talent) and save the automation for the weekends or Sundays, striking up a peaceful coexistence. This remained the case until national satellite radio services appeared, bringing shows like Howard Stern's to radio stations nationwide.

Back to the club and mobile realm, DJs soon became the standard fare for clubs and weddings, at first due to their drastically lower costs when compared to bands. They also took up less space, had a wider musical repertoire and were considered more reliable than the average band. (In fact, my first wedding job came as a result of a band breaking up a day before the reception.) For the next few decades, it would be smooth sailing for the club and mobile DJs, as technology was continually lightening their load with smaller, lighter and more efficient amps and speakers, all-in-one DJ consoles, the switch from vinyl records and cassette tapes to CDs, CDRs and MiniDiscs, and on to the MP3/computer-based systems we enjoy today. But the vision of some to eliminate

the person while keeping the entertainment has never gone away completely.

SHOT ACROSS THE BOW

The first real assault on our livelihoods came with the advent of the iPod. Hard drives had existed for a long time, but for some reason the merger of a



Stu Chisholm, a mobile DJ in the Detroit area since 1979, has also been a nightclub DJ, done some radio, some commercial voice-over work and has even worked a roller skating rink! Stu attended the famous Specs Howard School of Broadcasting and has been a music collector since the age of seven. Stu's guide to the profession, *The Complete DJ*, is available from ProDJ Publishing.

hard drive and MP3 player made people once again think they could dispense with paying “some guy to press play,” as one magazine article put it. As it was back in the ‘40s and ‘50s, the DJ was still considered nothing more than “the music.” If you have an iPod and a PA system, isn’t that the same thing?

Of course, we all know that it isn’t, and these days, while we still see the occasional article or bridal forum touting the idea of the iPod wedding, videos and stories of disastrous affairs pepper cyberspace to the point where the public is finally getting the idea that expecting great entertainment from an iPod is like expecting a gourmet meal from a TV dinner; you’ll eat, but there WILL be a sharp difference in quality. Enterprising DJs have even turned the iPod idea into an advantage, either using one as a back-up for their own playback systems, or having iPod parties at their club, letting patrons pit their playlists against each other. Just as before, when bands and DJs coexisted with jukeboxes, it seemed as if an uneasy truce has been called with the iPod. But this was just a battle, and entertainers, whether they know it or not, are in a war for survival.

MOBO ROBO?

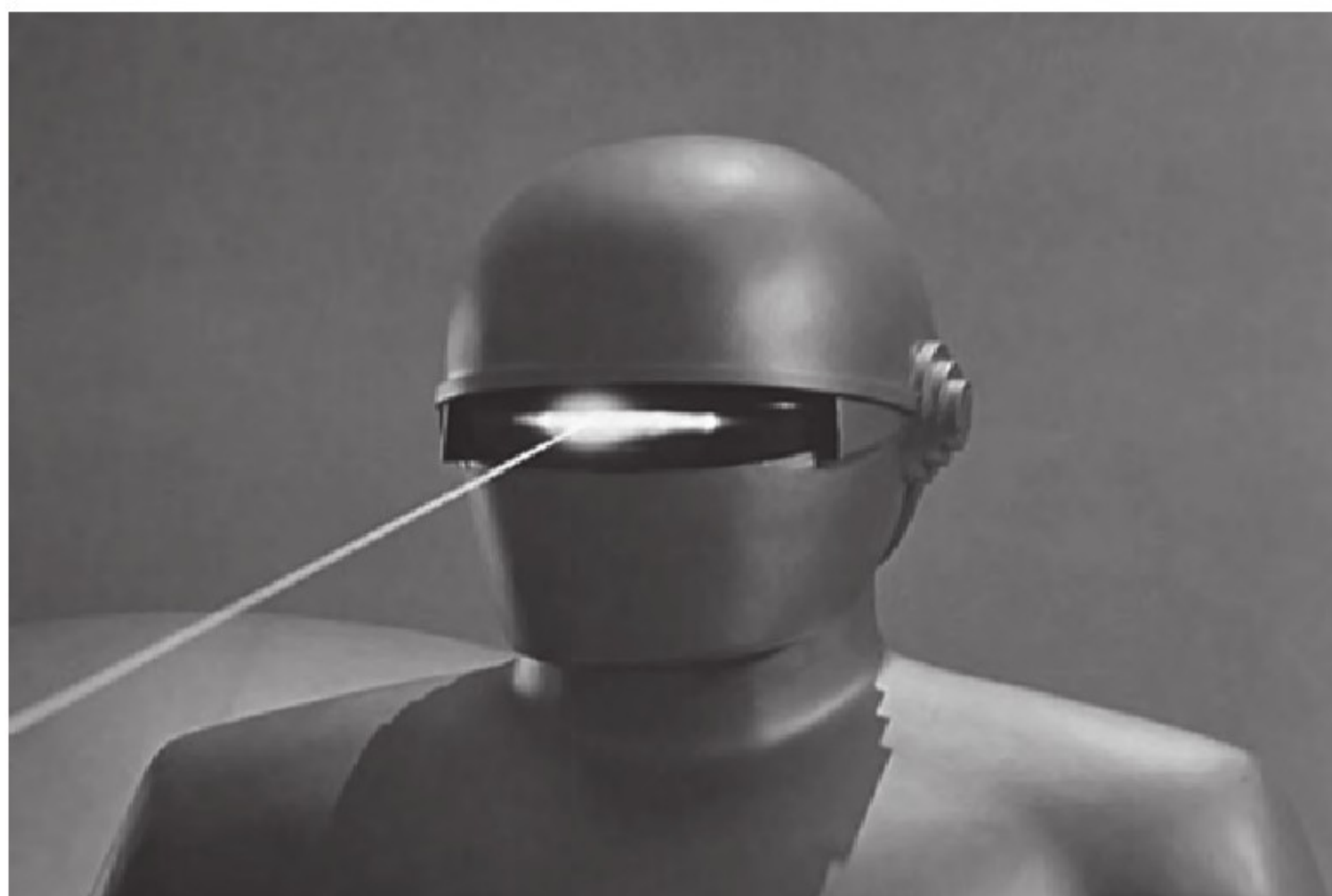
What’s the next threat? EDMNightlife.com reported that first DJ “terminator” took over the decks on February 15, 2014 at the Austin, Texas club, Fame. Supposedly, a Texas-based IT group calling their creation “Project POTPAL” had as their main focus “to create the absolute perfect experience for the nightclub management, while still maintaining the simple ‘push-button’ experience patrons are used to in major clubs.”

Although the report (<http://www.edmnightlife.com/robot-dj-used-by-nightclub-replaces-resident-djs/>) turned out to be an early April Fools-type prank, the serious reactions of many DJs indicates how real the possibility of a robotic disc jockey seems in this age of dizzying technological advancement.

Will robotic DJs become a reality some day? Probably. But if history is the best predictor of the future, then we can say with some confidence that once the novelty has worn off, there will be many a nightclub with a robotic DJ gathering dust in a back storeroom one day. Any club DJ who has spent time “in the trenches” knows that there’s much more to the job than just mechanical beatmixing and key matching. And what of venues that require the DJ to make frequent announcements, running shot specials, hyping upcoming events and so on, as well as interacting with the audience? Lastly, unless you’re Daft Punk, robots don’t have fans who will follow them from club to club.

Business owners are business owners, and all of them are looking for ways to cut overhead. Multi-op mobile companies are no different, and I’m guessing that all of the false appeal that robotic DJs might hold for club owners could also apply to them. It’s tempting to see paying a DJ as “wasting money” and to view their mobile DJ systems like photobooths, with an eye towards how many could be rented out each weekend. Here, too, it will be a novelty for a while, and any multi-op will be gambling on how long such appeal will persist. How long will it be before the public realizes, as it did with the do-it-yourself/iPod weddings, that there are sacrifices that come along with any novelty? And for the single operators and multi-ops who take a pass, the question is this: Will you be able to weather yet another storm?


Life is full of many myths and “common sense” ideas that appeal to human logic, yet when closely scrutinized or given a



real-world trial prove utter failures. My personal guess is that we will see a wave of robotic DJs come through the clubs and mobile operations and a lot of temporarily unemployed DJs before this idea also proves itself a bust. Perhaps one day, an android DJ might be up to the task and become a “personality” in its own right. However, at the current state-of-the-art, the day of “DJ Mr. Data” is still a long way off. Today’s challenge is whether or not we are up to the task of showing a clear distinction between the human element and DJ Mr. Coffee; or are we forever destined to be seen as “the music?” Are you indeed obsolete? The answer to that question isn’t up to anyone else but you.

Until next time, safe spinnin’. **MB**

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This Ain't Your Grandma's Church Function!

DIGIGAMES' EXTREME BINGO IN ACTION

By Ryan Burger



Bingo...well, for me, that brings up memories of going to my local Catholic church on Saturday nights for excitement with grandma and her friends. Maybe it brings up similar memories for you. But Extreme Bingo from DigiGames is way beyond that. Consider it part pub game, part music trivia, part "Name that Tune" and...completely fun.

Our test gig for Extreme Bingo was an after-prom where BC Productions has provided DJ services for the last couple years, and where I also serve on the planning committee. The after-prom involves the students being invited to a game night starting around midnight and going to around 4:00 or 5:00 AM. The goal is to keep the students out of trouble overnight, right after the prom has ended. It's a Midwestern tradition that has also spread to other parts of the country. It is a strong part of

our business for three or four weeks every spring.

In the past, we have brought out "the works," including karaoke, video game stations, photo booths, mini-golf and various versions of DigiGames' game shows to these events at area schools.

I saw Extreme Bingo as a great opportunity to provide a chill-down activity later during the overnight, after the students start running out of steam, but before the hypnotist and the door prize drawings that wrap up the evening. This was a good call, as it proved to be a successful addition to the event. After an hour of DigiGames trivia board (format is like TV's *Jeopardy*), mixing in questions about the students and the school, and giving out \$10 gift cards to the winners, it was time for Extreme Bingo while the students ate and socialized.

In advance of the event, I imported sets of 75 songs into the Extreme Bingo software after a 10 minute lesson with Keith Alan, who provided Extreme Bingo tech support. While

this was easy to do, I later found out that I had made a few mistakes in the import, which I was able to fix on the fly. The 75 songs needed for each set of bingo cards serve as the bingo numbers. The bingo cards were printed out earlier in the week and were ready for each game. I prepped for 9 games and ended up using 4 of them. The software works directly off of the ID3 tags of your MP3 files, so its accuracy is based on the accuracy of your tags. You can clean up the tags within the Extreme Bingo software, but it's better to do it in advance.

Hardware needed for the event:

- DigiGames Extreme Bingo Software with bingo cards prepped
- Your DJ music library as mentioned above in the prep
- Basic sound system, with mics, etc.
- Projector and screen or large LCD television

LET THE GAMES BEGIN...

You start out by handing out the cards for that round of bingo and explaining that "we will play 20-25 seconds of the song and in that time you need to see if it's on your card and mark it off." Standard bingo rules apply, allowing four corners, a line of five, diagonal, etc. You can set whether it's a blackout game, as well as other options in advance of starting the round.

Once you start the game, the software pretty much takes over for you and runs it from there. It will randomly pick the next song, play the prescribed length that you choose (either starting at the beginning, a random segment or a prescribed section), make a quick fade out of the song, display a logo (either Extreme Bingo or one of yours) and then fade into the next song. At our events, during that time when the song was playing, I was on the mic every few songs encouraging people, asking them if they have a couple in a row or what tracks they are in need of.

Once a bingo has been called, you then take the card up, put it in the software and it can tell you automatically if the card is a winner based on the card number printed in the corner of the sheet. Then it's on to a new game.

Each game lasted around 20 minutes and created a great, fun atmosphere. Besides our specific school application, there is a lot of potential here for other events where bingo is a good fit. One DJ I know recently booked a regular bar gig, where they want him to bring in Extreme Bingo every week. I can also see this as a great dinner-time entertainment option for corporate events and other functions. The key to making it fun is to make sure the music is tied to that audience and that they will know the tracks.

The software provides many other functionalities within the bingo environment such as picture, video, and Trivia Bingo but I didn't have any time to explore those options at the event I was producing.

Overall, Extreme Bingo is a very cool game show program, providing yet another "weapon" for your "arsenal of fun" from DigiGames.

The software costs \$499 and comes with licensing for two computers. **MB**

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New Day Dawns on the Tower

T100 SYSTEM AND T50 SELF-POWERED SYSTEM FROM DAWN PRO AUDIO

By J. Richard Roberts

Tower-like full-range speaker systems in the mobile DJ world have always been a polarizing issue. It seems to me that many of those who have flocked to them suffer from back problems (either real or imagined) and have gotten sick of hauling around big speakers and heavy amps.

And I suspect many were listening more to their backs than to their ears when considering these "compact line array" or "column array" systems. However, it was

with an open mind and open heart that I agreed to take the Dawn Pro Audio full-range tower systems—some of the newest entries in this category—out for a spin.

NEVER JUDGE A TOWER JUST BY ITS LOOKS...

That's not to say these tower systems from Dawn Pro Audio don't look good—they do. I'm simply saying that you can get great sound from a Dawn Pro Audio tower and take up less space doing it. At four different events, I was armed with pairs of their T100 and the T50 Speaker Towers along with a couple of 200S Subwoofers.

THE T100

Somewhere there is an "I'll be back" joke in the names of these towers. One thing they do have in common with a James Cameron Movie: They're "well thought out."

Initially, the T100's 100W may not impress, but keep in mind that Dawn Pro chose to focus on the RMS rating, rather than the sometimes-deceptively huge peak rating. Also note that, unlike a traditional speaker, the line-array configuration doesn't need to be as loud at the source (due to pairing) to carry farther away. (Like I said, well thought out.)

In fact, Dawn Pro's Matt Thornton insists that "...the column line array design provides much better control of the sound in poor audio environments, which is where a lot of DJs spend their time. By reducing reflections on top and below the speaker, the sound in front of the speaker is much clearer and more pleasing to the people in the crowd." My experience bore out this assertion.

Another smart plan was the flexible mixer-style input grid on the back of the speaker. It can receive two XLR (male) inputs or two 1/4" line level inputs and one 1/8" mixed-mono input across three separate channels (each with full gain, and dual-band EQ (high and low). Additionally, there are "link-in" and "link-out" connections, as well as a 1/4" connection for the separate "subwoofer out."

Size-wise, these rank as some of the smallest cabinets I've worked with on a pro level: 7.5" W x 28" H x 6.5" D, weighing 23 lbs.

THE T50

Really, the T50 is like the little brother of the T100, and you guessed it—it's rated at 50W RMS. Along with some 200S subwoofers, these speakers are great for a ceremony system, and with the same flexible built-in mixer on the rear, they can be used without the need for an external mixer. And of course, these are even smaller: 7" W x 19.75"

Feeling Like a Number

A lot of speaker and amplifiers use a peak rating, which can be very misleading and is primarily a marketing tool. Peak output is typically what the speaker or amplifier can hit for only a very brief moment, and even then the sound would contain undesirable distortion. The RMS (or "continuous") rating is much more of a real-world measurement and shows what the system will put out during regular operation. While Dawn Pro provides both measurements, we typically refer to the RMS rating of our speakers to give customers a real-world picture of what the product will do.

— Matt Thornton, Dawn Pro Audio

H x 8" D, weighing 16lbs.

THE 200S

Built to be compatible with either the T100 or the T50, the 200S provides not only the boom-boom for the room-room, but also the sturdy base in which the top tower speakers can sit. And, with its 200W RMS rating (400 peak), a system with two tops and two subs is equivalent to, if not greater than most full-range, all-in one small-scale powered speakers.

Dawn Pro has chosen to situate the "brains" of the operation in the top unit. With that in mind, the sub is connected via 1/4" speaker cable from the output on the satellite unit to the input on the sub, which is a positive when using the tops on tripods and pairing the subs for more thump.

MY TAKE

I was initially against most column array systems because of two things—attitude and sound. Many tower system users came across as arrogant, and I was unimpressed with their sound on the low end of the spectrum.

After using the T100 system paired with the 200S subs (two and two respectively), my qualms about tower-based systems went away, with good sound finally in the pocket. The highs carried like I needed them to, and I got that "icky thump" I was craving. Plus, I stopped worrying about the speaker elitists.

If you are thinking about moving to a tower-style, compact line array system, it's a brand new day—and Dawn Pro is worth serious consideration. **MB**

www.dawnproaudio.com



The New “Derby ‘N’ Dance Party” Will Put You in the Winner’s Circle!



DJs are raving about the high energy and excitement that the “Derby ‘N’ Dance Party” is bringing to their clients’ events. Stan Sauer of Custom Event Design says “We worked several years developing this product and now DJs are telling us that it was well worth the wait!” Stan points out some of the system’s many advantages:

- (1) It is extremely high energy.
- (2) It requires no out of pocket expense—you simply need a large TV or video screen! You do not have to have the elaborate backdrop (display) to get started.

(3) It is very user friendly. You basically run it with the push of a button.

(4) Unlike many game shows, where only two to four people are playing at a time, with this, everyone plays at the same time.

(5) High Profit.

Stan says, “We not only wanted to give our DJs a quality product that will generate strong revenue, but we also give our “affiliates” strong support, with custom marketing material.

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Return of the Mack

THE SRM550 AND SRM1850 DO THEIR FAMOUS ELDER SIBLING PROUD

By J. Richard Roberts

Mackie is one of those names in the industry that carries prestige due to the many solid, reliable products the company has produced over the years. For DJs, the name typically brings to mind (arguably) most popular powered speaker of all time, the SRM 450. In this review we're delving into that workhorse's much younger sibling, the SRM550 and its low-frequency counterpart, the SRM1850.

FIRST GLANCE

While the SRM450s were of a rather curved-design, which fit the spirit of the times in the late '90s, when everything from cars to computers (remember those multicolored iMacs?) had curves of some kind. The SRM550s have has

gone back to boxier lines (which, fortunately for mobile, makes for an easier pack).

Where the powered Mackies of the past were of a molded-plastic construction, the new SRM550s carry an all-wood (all black) construction that really does make them thump, as their marketing portrays. Also handy-by-design is the "V" angle of the speaker's back, perfect "V" for use as a monitor—or as I used them, for parade float sound. (Yes, I said "parade float.")

On the SRM1850 subwoofer, the design really corresponds to the top speaker, with the squared off design and the road-ready handles. Compatibility-wise, this is really a great match with the SRM550 and SRM1850. (More on that later.)

INSIDE EDITION

Much like the SRM450s, the new SRM550 carries a 12" woofer, but that's about where the comparisons end. The SRM550 delivers an amazing (peak) output of 1600W with a 1.4" compression dome driver that handles the high/high-mid wavelengths.

The versatility of the SRM550 is also very cool, as there are four modes that one can select: PA, DJ, MONITOR or SOLO. These modes act to "voice" the speaker for each application, which includes determining the proper crossover point. A feedback suppression system limits the multiplied frequencies that cause feedback. Finally, there is also built-in DSP protection that protects your investment by kicking in when the speaker is driven too hard.

On the back of the SRM550 is a built-in, two-channel mixer that allows for XLR, 1/4" TRS, or dual RCA connections. For mobile DJs, this provides a



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good backup in case of performance mixer failure—not a common occurrence, but potentially the most disastrous. With the SRM550, the show can go on.

BOOM BOOM FOR THE ROOM ROOM

When pairing the SRM550 with the SRM1850, you gain another 1600W (peak) of low-end sound. With an 18" driver, this front-ported sub with a birch cabinet is surprisingly lightweight, at 74 lbs. That's near the top of most DJs' lifting ranges, but surprisingly easy when considering that it never gets more than 4" off the ground due to four-wheel carts and trailers.

The SRM1850 is also adept at taking signals with a two-channel mixer that includes two XLR inputs and the option of a high-pass or full-range output for each channel. The helpful engineers at Mackie also added a crossover function that allows the user to pick the frequency at which the subs kick in.

By the way, both the SRM550 and the SRM1850 are extremely modest with power consumption. Even at gig-volume with two subs and two tops, I was only pulling 10 amps, at most, according to my measurements. Powered speaker amplifiers in general these days are getting crazy efficient, and this new crop of Mackies is no exception to that new rule.

MY TIME WITH THE MACKIES

I literally have had the speakers for a couple months (sorry Mackie!) but in that time I've been able to see the full scope of what they can do. I've used them for outdoor movies, parade sound, weddings, backyard party rentals, and yes, as a PA for a public event.

With that, I can say I've run the gamut and never been let down. For functions of up to 400 people, these speakers really live up to the reputation that the aforementioned SRM450s left as a legacy. Clear, loud and reliable, plus easier to use than ever due to the back panel controls.

ONE FOR THE ROAD

Personally, I can say that these speakers work for me. Now that I'm going to be parting with them, I will miss the versatility and the usability the most. I can see how they would also be a great help for non-technically-focused DJs in achieving the proper settings for great sound at whatever event they may be doing. The folks at Mackie have definitely built a great new series worthy to take their place in an already-excellent loudspeaker tradition. **MB**

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Serious Connectivity

ALTO PROFESSIONAL BLACK SERIES

By Marc Andrews

Never having used Alto Professional speakers I don't know what they were like before inMusic—the parent company of Numark and several other brands—got hold of them; but I know I like them now.

The Alto speakers I checked out were the Black 15 x 2 15" 2400W active full range speakers and the Black 18S 18" 2400W active subwoofer, along with Live Drive, an app for using Bluetooth connectivity with the speakers and making other adjustments.

READY, SET...

For our test gig, we entertained at a high school prom with approximately 200 students in attendance. We were on a small stage and had the speakers up on our Frankenstand tripods. The test DJ rig included a Rane mixer and Pioneer MEP-7000 media player. We wired the Black 15 speakers through the Black 18 Sub with its pass-through connections. Once audio was running to all of the

speakers we used Bluetooth to pair with them and make some remote adjustments. More details on this are available on a video on the Alto Pro site; but it was certainly easy enough to figure out without it as well.

According to our client, the sound was "amazing." We were set up in the school's cafeteria atrium area, against one of the longer walls in the room. The students were pretty close to us. Because of being able to set up early we had plenty of time to experiment with the cool features of the speakers tied to the Live Drive application.

LIVE DRIVE

While I'm not a total technophile like some of my staff, I can see the functionality that Alto Pro's Live Drive is able to give you, especially when given time to tweak your system. Live Drive is an iOS app that allows you to make changes to the speakers.

Once paired with the speakers or the



whole Alto Pro Black system, you can go into each speaker through the app, change its DSP, volumes, EQ, plus more advanced settings like delays and other test features. For multi-ops, you can even lock out your less experienced DJs from really messing with anything on the back of the speaker by setting everything internally with the app and then locking it down. My hope is that this Live Drive system and app expands its ability to control more Alto Pro products, and maybe even other inMusic products like Numark DJ gear.

THE LINE UP

The Black Series lineup includes 10", 12" and 15" full-range two-way speakers, and 15" and 18" subwoofers, all with wireless connectivity. For weddings, I would personally recommend a pair 12" speakers with at least a single 15" sub. While we did our testing on-site with the 18" sub, it is a bit more bulky than its 15" little brother, which would put out enough for most weddings. On the school dances I would recommend going with 15" tops along with possibly two 15" subs or one 18" sub, similar to our test rig. One big strength of the Black Series is its expandability, and with the addition of the Alto Pro Stealth Wireless system (see

below), adding more speakers, without adding cables, is a very attractive option for getting the job done.

www.altoproaudio.com/microsites/blackseries/

Making Cables Disappear with Stealth Wireless

In a separate wedding reception gig we added the Alto Pro Stealth Wireless system to the two Black 15s and Black 18 sub. This allowed us to move the one Black 15 speaker over by the head table during dinner with no concern for getting an XLR cable to the speaker.

For many weddings we do, we end up moving some hardware after the main dinner portion of the evening has ended, but this sometimes results in our set up being farther away from the head table than we would like. If the speakers are too far away from the head table, it makes it so that the best man's voice is coming from a completely different part of the room than where he is speaking, which, of course, seems unnatural.

When this happens, you usually have to run long XLR cables to get the sound coming from where the people are expecting it. But not when you go wireless!

While I have tried similar products out in the past, none has performed as well for me as the Stealth Wireless system. It's basically like reversing a wireless microphone system. You take the transmitter unit and plug it into your rack on a booth-out or similar plug, so you can separately control the volume of the remote speaker, then take one of the receivers, connect it to the speaker, and either hook it onto a fly-point screw mount or use the "Velcro" mountings that come with it. Working on the UHF band, it has selectable channels, so you can send sound to speakers without messing up your wireless mic setup.

The only improvement I'd like to see to these with the next generation would be moving to a rechargeable battery system, since we are trying to get away from wires in every way.

This product does the job very nicely and could become a regular part of our company's arsenal, especially for situations where we really want or need to do away with cables. **MB**

www.altoproaudio.com/products/stealth-wireless



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Patent Pending

Turning the Table

FASTSET: EXACTLY WHAT I NEEDED!

By Ryan Burger

Sometimes exactly what you need to solve a problem in your business is something extremely simple. Most of the time, when doing a gig at an average hotel or school, the facility provides you with a nice skirted table to set up your rig on and surround with your gear/speakers and more. But often you are in other places where such isn't available or you are in need of a bit more space to work, and that's where the Fastset table fits in perfectly.

The Fastset® Musicians/DJ Utility Table is a completely American-made table that can

adjust to wherever you need it. As I have found from using it outdoors at an Easter egg hunt event, doing game shows and karaoke for schools and bars, this 20-pound, solid stand is something that you need to carry in your vehicle at all times, just for those unexpected situations where you need a FAST solution to a set-up difficulty. It's no surprise to find out that the Fastset table was designed by a DJ. It will definitely help save your back from wear and tear.

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Available through select dealers such as IDJNow, NLFX Professional and others, you can find out more information and watch helpful demo videos at Fastset's website. The tables are also available through Stretchyscreens.com, which provides scrims specifically for the Fastset product.

www.fastsetusa.com



It's a Charger! It's a Stand! It's Une Bobine!

By Michael Buonaccorso

In our never-ending search for those little gadgets to make being a mobile DJ as mobile as possible, we came across a fun and functional piece of geek hardware, called Une Bobine.

No, it's not the Unibomber, it's the Une Bobine. Bobine means "coil" in French and that's exactly what this thing is: a coiled, gooseneck sync/charge cable for the iPhone. (There's also a microUSB version for Android and other phones.) It's a cable, dock, tripod and stand rolled together into the world's most flexible iPhone charger. It's small enough to fit in your accessory bag, but strong

enough to hold your iPhone in a nearly unlimited assortment of positions, utilizing a flexible metal arm that can bend, twist, and, well, coil in nearly any position you want.

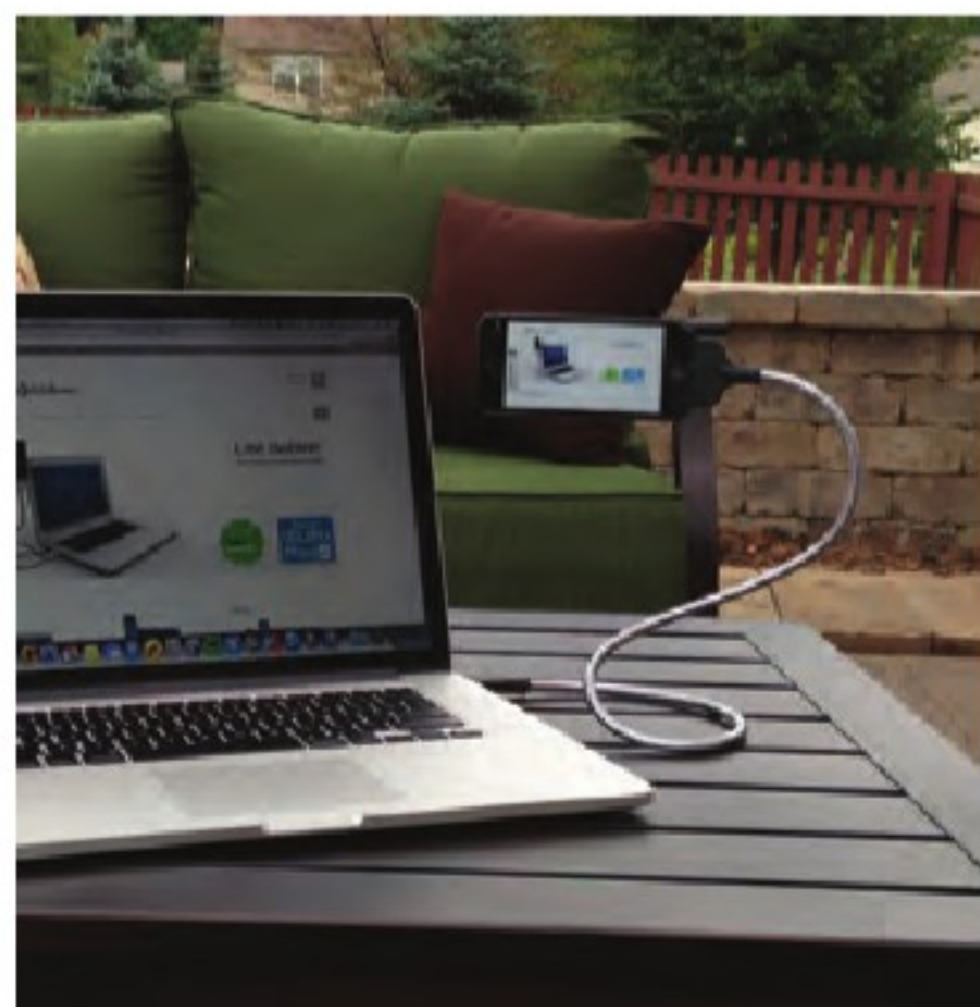
Practical application? You're at the gig, always looking for that perfect place to set your phone so you're sure you have access to it. (Not for calls, silly,—when

you're using it as your hip new music source, of course.) Une Bobine's coil acts in a similar way to a gooseneck microphone holder, so not only is your phone continuously charging, but it is just a glance away in a fully functional position. Picture one of those Indian snake charmers: Une Bobine is the body, your phone is the head of the cobra!

The only real downsides, (which are minor) would be, in some configurations the coil isn't strong enough to handle an iPhone's weight, and, also, you may have to remove your phone from its protective case, which is not the most convenient thing. But overall, its benefits—among them the ability to charge, sync, and have your phone at eye level—outweigh the minor inconveniences.

Une Bobine costs \$34.95 and is available at the manufacturer's website.

www.fusechicken.com/products/une-bobine-for-iphone-5



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Select Mix Culture Shock

By Ryan Burger

In June, the Select Mix team announced they had acquired the catalog of the Culture Shock remix service. Culture Shock was one of many remix services that had good runs for five or ten years back in the 1990s and 2000s. While there was usually some good talent doing the mixes, often they just didn't last.

But thankfully all that great work will not have to stay hidden away. As Select Mix has apparently established a routine of making deals with these legacy companies to bring their material to the digital download generation.



A total of 24 discs have been released by Select Mix to bring back the Culture Shock material. And these are discs that you will want to check out if you are into bringing a funkier version of tracks to your events. Culture Shock focused on alternative rock, which set them apart from other services. It's a great way to bring rock into a pop/urban set of music.

Listening through the discs now, without a doubt I would recommend getting their three volumes of mashups, and their Halloween Editions on volume 5 and 13. Each disc contains 9 or 10 killer tracks.

On the mashups it's amazing what can be done with INXS and OutKast or J Kwon vs. Nine Inch Nails. Or, how about

Will Smith mashing up with the Bangles?

My other favorite party mixes are the two special releases with a Halloween theme. You get remixed versions of "Weird Science," "Monster Mash," "Thriller" and more. While I wouldn't use these at the average wedding or school dance, for a regular Halloween night gig where you probably have to play a couple of these multiple times, why not throw a cool funky mix at the audience?

Check these out at the Select Mix website; you can sample them with their built-in engine, which lets you hear a good amount of the tracks before you buy.

DJ Storyteller Silenced: RIP, Casey Kasem

By Ryan Burger

One of the most recognizable voices in American pop music history, Casey Kasem, died on June 15th, 2014. Kasem was among the first "name" DJs that many people who grew up listening to the radio during the 1970s and 1980s got to know.

In addition to his smooth, upbeat vocal delivery during his weekly shows playing the top songs in the country, children of the era might also recognize his voice work as Shaggy Rogers on all the Scooby Doo cartoons, as well as several of the Transformers from the eighties action cartoon.

He hosted the American Top 40 and Casey's Top 40 weekend radio shows that many of us music fans who grew up to be DJs listened to intently. Some of us even started our careers in radio out playing alongside his shows. Personally, I got my DJ start spinning

his show at the local affiliate radio station in Des Moines, Iowa.

In an article published on the day he retired from radio, in January 2004, ABC News called him "The Dick Clark of Radio," saying that "his pioneering influence on radio is comparable to Dick Clark's on TV."

In the same article, Kasem told ABC News about his dedications: "You are a bit of a voyeur. You are hearing something that someone else is experiencing. When I do the letters, sometimes it takes me three, four, five times to read them until we get it exactly right."

After my DJ journey brought me to publishing Mobile Beat, I had the pleasure a direct interaction with Casey Kasem. Back in 2009, as the "love story" concept was beginning to take hold among many mobile entertainers as an offering for wedding couples, I thought of Kasem as a possible seminar speaker, to share from his experience in telling the stories of his long distance requests and dedications. I emailed him about appearing



at Mobile Beat Las Vegas, not expecting a response. But two days later I heard that unmistakable voice on my voicemail, asking me to call him back. I did, and we had a great discussion about DJs. He politely turned me down because of health issues, but asked me to send him a magazine so he could enjoy it.

In homage to his signature sign-off, "Keep your feet on the ground and keep reaching for the stars," fans can now console themselves with the thought that their favorite golden-voiced DJ has reached the stars, and is probably playing requests and dedications for the heavenly audience. **ME**

An Evil Genius at Middle School

WHEN REGULAR TROUBLESHOOTING ISN'T ENOUGH

By Charlie Xavier

This is a story of making sure all your gear works perfectly, going through troubleshooting repeatedly, and then finally giving up...only to find out after the gig that an "evil genius" was at work.

Last day of school at a local middle school and the kids are ready for summer. For the last few years we have entertained at their end-of-year celebration, bringing out a dance party DJ for the outdoor part and a KJ for karaoke in the school cafeteria. Realizing that on the last day of school there is no way to get anything done, the school has been doing this for years. And we have gladly been part of it.

I'm handling the karaoke inside. I set up on a table in the cafeteria--32" LCD TV, karaoke laptop loaded up with tracks, a basic DJ mixer and a couple of powered speakers. With the TV turned towards the students, my laptop is facing only me. Using Tricerasoft's Just Karaoke, I have a preview monitor section on my screen, while the students will read off the big TV. All plugged in and tested and I have an extra 30 minutes to go, so I sit and relax, preparing for next 3 hours of craziness.

The bell rings and the kids come in. Karaoke books are set to the side and they are instructed to hand in their requests to a teacher who checks the songs and then hands them to me to put in order in the software for singing. It takes about 10 minutes for the first requests to come up. As filler, I play some other fun music, but then get to cueing up the tracks for the first singers. First singers come up, we start the song and...about half-way in, the TV just turns off. Thinking it's just a fluke, I turn it back on, stall for a moment while it comes up and the students pick right up where they were. A song or so later it happens again. So I check the cables, thinking maybe the HDMI out of the back of the TV or into the laptop is loose, and it is a little bit, so I tighten it up and stage tape the cable down on both ends so it can't happen again.

Five minutes later, or maybe it wasn't even that long, the TV went out again. OK, it must be the power. Because of being on a small sound system I have everything running through one circuit, maybe that is pulling it down. So I get an extension cord and run the power for the TV and laptop to a totally new circuit quickly. But then it happens yet again.

Finally, I give up. I set it up so the laptop screen is facing students, and in between songs I talk for a bit, stalling while cueing up the next song. Looks unprofessional but it's functional.

During a break between groups of kids, I go through

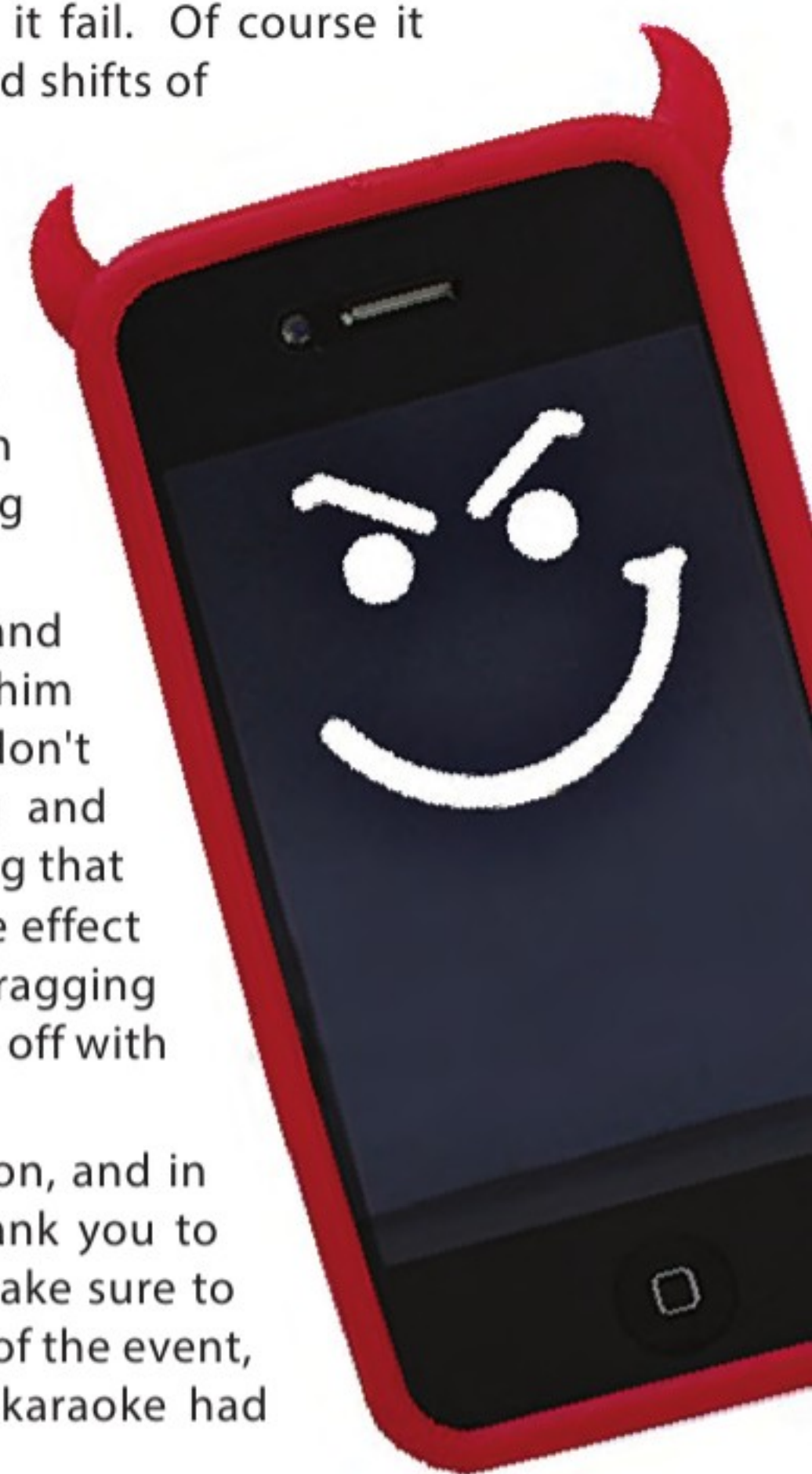
everything again, and try to make it fail. Of course it doesn't. But for the second and third shifts of students I work with the uncomfortable setup and the students are happy.

Afterwards, tearing out, I'm worn out and really ready for the day to be over because of how much extra work is needed when working under such circumstances.

A student comes up to me and asks what was up with the TV. I tell him the quick story on it about how I don't know and was considering going and buying an extra TV and just throwing that one away. He says something to the effect of "Don't do that. My friend was bragging about how he was turning it on and off with an app on his phone."

WHAT?! Being a peaceful person, and in my zone at the time, I just say thank you to the student and then sit down. I make sure to mention it to the teacher in charge of the event, in case she hears about how the karaoke had trouble.

So, the moral of the story is, when you have checked everything (and double-checked, and triple-checked...), and the trouble is still there, it's obviously something you could have never thought of! **MB**



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No Reply?

HOW TO GET BRIDES AND GROOMS TO RESPOND TO YOUR EMAILS

By Stephanie Padovani

Here's the scenario: You receive a couple of emails about your DJ services. You respond promptly with all the enthusiasm you can muster and...you never hear back from them.

What the heck is going on?

Considering the fact that only 11% of email even gets opened, yours has to be good if you want a response. Fortunately, you can take these simple actions to boost your response rate 30-70%.

email from your buddy Bob, you open it.

Don't make the mistake of responding to a contact form lead with the forgettable subject, "Inquiry." Change your subject line to something that grabs her attention, such as the bride's name and wedding date.

Rather than sending emails from "info@acmedjcompany.com," use your first name. The bride or groom is much more likely to open an email from a real person than a business.

2) KEEP IT SHORT

One of the biggest mistakes DJs make when responding to an inquiry is writing long paragraphs of text that are extremely difficult to read online. Most couples aren't reading at all, they're skimming, and long responses get ignored.

Forget what your English teacher taught you. Each paragraph should be no more than two or three sentences, in an easy to read font.

Get to the point quickly. What action do you want them to take? Make it clear and concise.

3) GO FOR ONE CALL TO ACTION

Another mistake is asking a half a dozen questions or inviting them to take a dozen different actions such as visiting your website, reading your reviews, friending you on Facebook, calling for a consultation, etc.

Too many options is overwhelming, especially for busy couples. When they get overwhelmed, they take no action.

Determine the most important initial action you want, and make it the sole purpose of your email.

4) BE PERSONABLE AND DIFFERENT

A typical bride receives dozens of emails immediately following a bridal show. Can you guess how most of them begin?

"Congratulations on your engagement!"

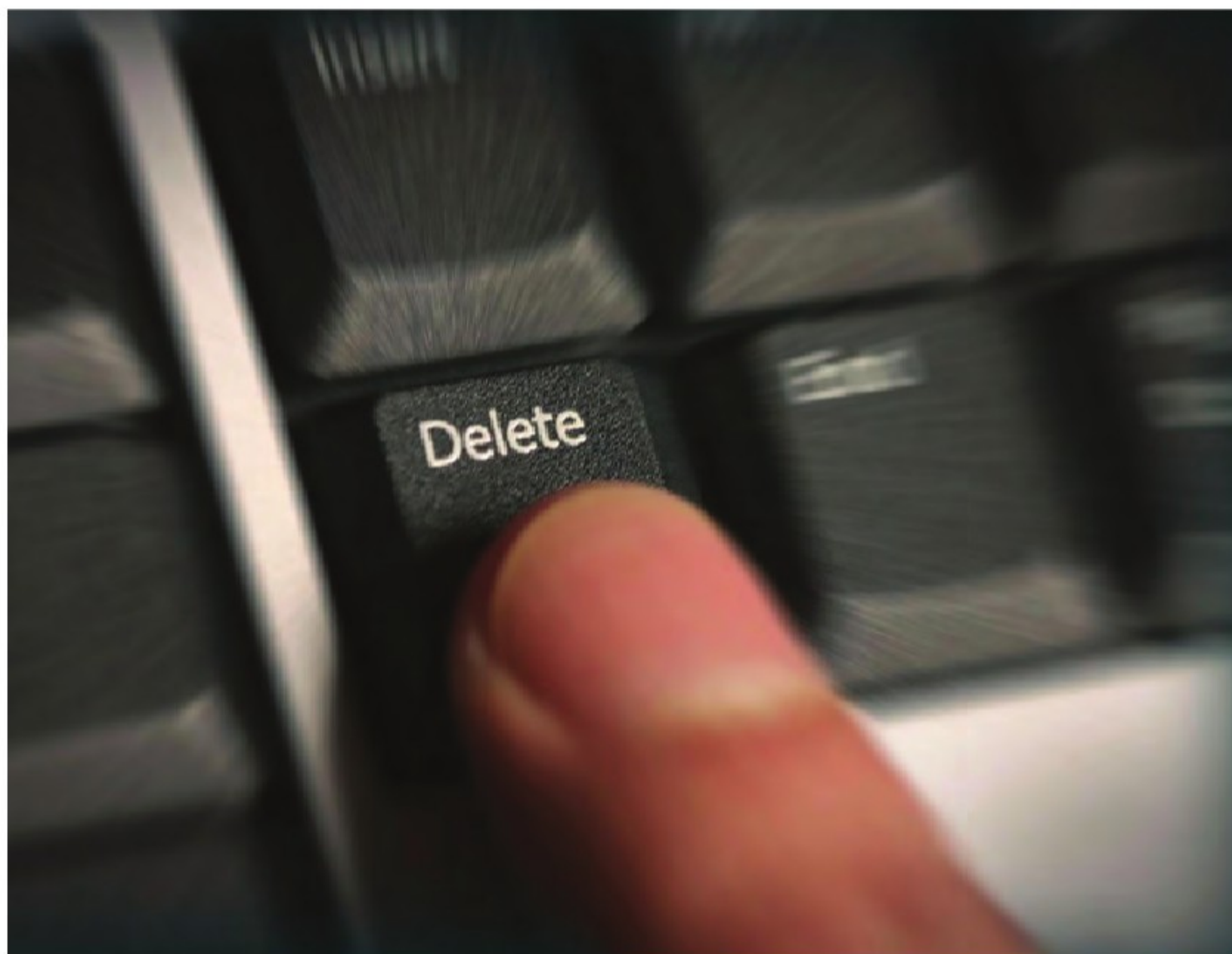
While there's nothing wrong with congratulating the couple, it's what everyone else is doing, which makes it difficult to stand out and is downright boring.

Write something that shows your personality and sets you apart. Ditch the formal corporate speak ("We at Acme DJ Company treat our customers like family...") and write the way you'd talk to a real person. Yes, contractions, slang and all.

Some great ideas:

- Tell a story about one of your weddings.
- Use humor or a funny image.
- Share an inspiring idea or wedding trend.

Be different and whatever you do, don't be boring!



1) USE AN INTERESTING SUBJECT LINE AND PERSONAL "FROM" ADDRESS

Your first order of business is to get that email opened.

Think back to the last time you checked your email. How did you decide which emails to open and which to delete?

You look at a few key factors: the "from" address and the email subject line. If the subject line congratulates you about inheriting money from someone in Nigeria—DELETE. If it's an



Stephanie Padovani and her husband, Jeff, are the dynamic husband-wife duo behind **Book More Brides**, the #1 marketing resource for the wedding industry. Visit BookMoreBrides.com/priceshopper to learn "How to Position Yourself as a Valued Wedding Expert in Only Five Minutes."

5) ASK A QUESTION TO GET THE ACTION YOU WANT

Most DJs want to get the bride or groom on the phone. This is usual way they try to accomplish it.

"If you'd like to learn more about our DJ services, give me a call..."

This weak call to action is easy to ignore. Instead, ask a question designed to get the action you desire. "Are you available for a quick phone chat tomorrow at 4 PM?"

Naming a specific time means the bride doesn't have to look at her calendar and choose a date. Either she's available or she's not. If she's not, she can propose another time.

It's also very difficult to ignore a question once it's asked, which immediately makes it more likely that she will respond.

6) INCLUDE A DEADLINE OR INCENTIVE

If you're trying to get a fast response, give them a compelling reason to take action. One example: "Everyone who sets an appointment this week gets a free gift certificate to pay for their gas."

If you're following up with someone after the meeting, let them know that you're no longer holding the date for them. Or that a special offer is about to expire. They'll act quickly if they're interested once there's something to lose.

7) USE THIS WEIRD "LAST RESORT" EMAIL

Ever meet with a couple and end up chasing them down for months with emails and phone calls? I promise you, they don't

enjoy it, either.

This weird email gets a response 99% of the time. It's best used as a true last resort after you've attempted to reach them by more traditional means at least three times.

"Dear [Bride's Name],

On the XXth of March, we emailed about your wedding...and as I haven't heard from you, I can only assume one of the following:

1) You're now not interested and I'm reduced to the status of an annoying piece of spam clogging up your email or

2) You desperately want to contact me, but you're trapped under a fallen filing cabinet and can't reach your phone or PC.

P.S. If it is #2, please let me know and I'll send someone ASAP to help you out."

Wedding pros who've used this email report record responses within 15 minutes! Warning: The recipient must have a sense of humor or it may backfire. But if that were to happen, you probably didn't want to work with them anyway.

Getting a response these days is a challenge, but it's easily accomplished when you're willing to think outside the box and follow these strategies. Learn more about how to turn those email leads into booked weddings at BookMoreBrides.com/priceshopper. **MB**

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The Truth About Non-Refundable Deposits

UNDERSTANDING HOW AN IMPORTANT CONTRACT CLAUSE REALLY WORKS

By Rob Schenk

Most people in the wedding business know you have to protect your time and resources. For vendors, damages from a cancellation can range from losses on food that spoils, to alteration costs on gowns, to lost opportunities for booking another wedding. It can be particularly difficult for many vendors to prove monetary loss for missed opportunity because a certain weekend was popular or they didn't have time to hire adequate help. A non-refundable deposit is one of the best tools to ensure you're compensated by a fickle bride.

But, are non-refundable deposits legal?

Yes and no.

Let's back up first. Let's talk about lawsuits and the general purpose of lawsuits: collecting damages (i.e. money, i.e. dolla dolla bills, i.e. the mean green).

DAMAGES 101

For most people who end up suing, damages are the most important part—getting their money back. Generally, the law compensates plaintiffs for the actual amount of harm suffered, so that the plaintiff would be in the same position that she would have been, had the defendant not breached. These are called "expectation damages."

For example, a bride cancels her \$5,000 contract with a caterer. The caterer may sue the bride for breach of contract. Let's say that the caterer's costs (food and employees) totaled \$2,000. The expectation damages are \$3,000, or the value of the contract less the expenses. This will place the caterer in the position that she would have been in, had the wedding not been cancelled.

But wait! The law requires that the caterer must "mitigate" her damages. This means that the caterer must make reasonable attempts to book another event or sell any food to someone else. If the caterer does not attempt to mitigate, her damages could be reduced or even lost.

Often, the cost, both in time and money (greedy attorneys!), outweighs the value of chasing the bride down and recovering expectation damages.

ENTER: THE NON-REFUNDABLE DEPOSIT

So, you, the wedding business professional, have learned to get at least some money up front. That way, should the bride cancel, there is less need to go through the time-intensive and costly litigation process: proving your case, proving your damages, showing the court that you mitigated the damages, etc.

A non-refundable deposit (or "retainer," "installment," etc.) is basically the vendor's way of saying,



"These are my damages if you cancel, and I am entitled to them without having to do anything else...punk."

The law refers to the non-refundable deposit as a Liquidated Damages Clause (the "LDC"). As stated, the LDC must reflect a good faith effort to estimate the damages suffered from a breach, or should represent a value amount of the contract that you would be happy with if the bride bailed at a particular point in time prior to the wedding.

Courts typically require the amount to be reasonable and that the harm suffered (your damages if the bride cancels) be difficult to accurately quantify at the time of the breach. For wedding industry professionals, harm at the time of breach is difficult to assess mainly because (1) booking an equivalent wedding on the same date is almost always a difficult proposition and (2) expenses incurred vary depending on how close the breach occurs to the wedding. To put it another way, the purpose is compensation, not punishment or trying to deter the bride from breaching. Where the purpose is punishment, an LDC becomes a penalty and is no longer enforceable. Often, courts find sums that are too large or unrelated to the loss suffered to be penalties, but the burden will be on the challenging party to prove the unreasonableness.

States differ on how stringently they interpret the terms of a contract. For instance, New York considers an LDC for the entire value of the contract a penalty, and where there is any doubt at all, considers an LDC a penalty. California actually has two different standards for personal contracts and consumer contracts. So, the jurisdiction in which a contract is executed may play a crucial role in whether the LDC is enforced. (Gotta love Federalism!)

So let's look at a real life example, shall we?

In June 2003, Vincent Morrocco,



Much of attorney Rob Schenk's practice is dedicated to representing and educating wedding professionals, from speaking engagements, to maintaining WeddingIndustryLaw.com, and, of course, to arguing on their behalf in the courtroom.

through Barry Herman, hired the Cashmere Thirteen to play his daughter's wedding in August of 2004. He paid a \$3,300 deposit. Less than a month before the date, the wedding was postponed until October 2005. Morrocco signed another contract, and paid a \$4,000 deposit. Both contracts contained LDCs. When his daughter canceled again, Morrocco sued to recover the \$7,300 he paid in deposits, challenging the clause as a penalty.

Morrocco lost. Not only did he lose in New Jersey superior court, Morrocco lost again on appeal.

(Morroco v. Limetree Enterprises, Inc., 2008 N.J. Super. Unpub. LEXIS 840 [2008])

The LDC in the contract was captioned "NON-REFUNDABLE DEPOSIT: BALANCE DUE." Below the caption, the contract read: "Once you sign the contract the deposits are not refundable for any reason." Another caption explicitly labeled the LDC: "CANCELLATION OF CONTRACT: LIQUIDATED DAMAGES." Below, the contract read: "In addition, You understand that the service provided by the Orchestra/Performers is unique and that the Orchestra/Performers makes arrangements to provide music a substantial time before the Date of the Engagement. You understand that the Orchestra/Performers will engage musicians to appear on the Date of Engagement. If you cancel this contract, the Orchestra/Performers will suffer damages because of its obligation to those musicians. These damages are difficult to measure. Therefore, if You cancel this contract at any time up to thirty-one (31) days before the Date of Engagement, the Orchestra/Performers has the right to keep the deposits as liquidated damages to compensate the Orchestra/Performers for

expenses and losses which result from cancellation of Contract by You."

The court held this LDC was reasonable. Herman could never account for the number of potential clients he turned away while Morrocco had the Cashmere Thirteen booked. Further, Herman immediately utilized part of the deposit to reserve the band and part to pay the salesman who booked the gig. As such, Herman would suffer immediate actual damage if he had to return the deposit.

Indeed, the deposit represented a dollar figure that would leave any already incurred expenses paid, along with an appropriate amount of revenue representing lost profit. Thus, the LDC was enforceable as compensation to Herman in the event of a breach, rather than being a penalty for Morrocco to prevent a breach.

A FINAL WORD ON NON-REFUNDABLE DEPOSITS (LDCS)

While LDCs are immensely useful, they may be potentially damaging for a vendor. Generally, the vendor is only entitled to the value of the LDC in the event of the breach. This means that if a bride cancels, and you retain the LDC amount, you cannot go after the bride for more.

Thus, the non-refundable deposit is a tool that should be used thoughtfully, as part of a comprehensive legal approach to making sure your business is protected from potential harm. It really is worth getting a real attorney to help determine the best strategy for your business. **MB**



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Is Twitter the New Promo Standard?

BRAND MESSAGING IN THE 140-CHARACTER WORLD, PART I

By John Stiernberg

In the last issue, we talked about how clients get information and make decisions. While the range of promotional media is wider than ever, the vast majority of your customers use Internet searches and social media as part of their planning and decision process. By now, you have an online presence of some sort—website, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, or all of the above. How do you craft brand messages that draw in the right customers?

How important is search engine optimization (SEO)? Are there guidelines for creating attention-getting messages? This article (part 1 of 2) takes a closer look at managing your customer's attention and suggests three action tips for creating a compelling promotional message.

THE ELECTRONIC MEDIA REVOLUTION

In journalism, article length is measured in number of words. USA Today or Radar Online news briefs top out at a few hundred words per piece. A feature in Rolling Stone or Vanity Fair may be a few thousand words. And of course a picture (with caption) is worth a thousand words. The challenge is to attract and keep the reader; the reader is relatively easy to attract, harder to keep. The process is called "attention management." The writer needs to help the reader manage her or his attention; in other words, screen out

the useless noise in favor of focusing on the good stuff.

Journalists often put the essence of a news brief into the first sentence or two of an article, then go deeper within the publication's guidelines for article length. In the Internet era (now over 20 years), the promise of unlimited space for electronic text spawned a new medium: the blog. Authors can wax endlessly on whatever they want to. It's a new world for journalism, marketing, and personal expression.

Electronic media has also created a challenge for both writers and readers: how to decide what to read. The choices are vast and infinitely expanding. The "bookmark" metaphor has extended from analog (books and magazines) to digital media (your web browser and related apps). RSS feeds automatically filter what you are interested in vs. what you are not interested in. When readers get confused or fatigued, your message is lost.

So what is the connection with branding and sales promotion?

THE TWITTER STANDARD FOR ATTENTION MANAGEMENT

Forget word count. Enter Twitter and its 140-character per tweet limit. Tens of millions of people (myself included) now use Twitter to filter their news and information. But...140 characters?! What can you say in such little mind-space? This is especially difficult in businesses like mobile entertainment where too many elevator pitches start with, "Well, you gotta understand. I wear many hats." There went 44 of those precious 140 characters!

Today's promotional challenge is to craft a targeted message that can attract your target customer in tweet-length bursts. Yes, I know that you can't describe your company, your great track record, your happy customers, your

state-of-the-art sound and lighting system, and white-glove customer service in a tweet. By the way, that last sentence included 189 characters and spaces...

CREATING A COMPELLING—AND COMPACT—PROMOTIONAL MESSAGE

So, you've got about one long sentence to attract the client and manage their attention so that they click through to your website or blog and eventually even pick up the phone and call you. Here are three action tips for planning your approach.

Action Tip 1. Think like your target clients. Understand 1) where they get information, 2) what key words and images will attract their attention, and 3) what will get them to invest the time to read more than a tweet. Hot suggestion: Ask a few recent clients to answer those questions.

Action Tip 2. Plan the information flow. Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn can be further linked so that you can post a single message and it will appear on all three of your accounts. If the reader "likes" the post, she or he needs to be able to click through to somewhere (your website) to get the rest of the story. Make sure the story is there when they arrive, and that you can capture contact their information to form the basis of a sales lead.

Action Tip 3: Do a test. Try a punchy new message and see how many click-throughs you get. Integrate the process with your CRM or contact management system to assure that you can follow through from a sales perspective. If it works, do it again. If not, adjust the copy and try again (more on this next issue).

HERE'S THE POINT...

Your target clients don't have much time to make a decision regarding which mobile entertainer they are going to hire. Your promotional messaging and online media need to take client attention management and the Twitter Standard into account. Remember to complete the Action Tips in sequence: 1) Think like your target clients; 2) plan the information flow to both attract and retain customer attention; and 3) make sure that you are set up to test the results of your promotional efforts.

Next issue we'll talk more about how to create high-impact sales-oriented promotional messages, including both good and bad examples. In the meantime, best wishes for big success in 2014! **MB**



John Stiernberg is founder and principal consultant with Stiernberg Consulting (www.stiernberg.com). John has over 25 years experience in the music and entertainment technology field. He currently works with audio and music companies and others on strategic planning and market development. His book *Succeeding In Music: Business Chops for Performers and Songwriters* is published by Hal Leonard Books. Contact John via e-mail at john@stiernberg.com, or on LinkedIn and Facebook. Follow him at <http://twitter.com/JohnStiernberg>.

Credit Card Pressure

Dear Dave,

My wife and I own a small business, and we run it debt-free. We only accept cash or checks in payment. Recently, we've had a client start pushing us to accept credit cards. What is your take on this situation?

– David

Dear David,

For starters, that client is out of bounds. It's not his or her place to tell you two how to run your business. In a way, you're kind of lucky to only have one person getting pushy about the whole credit card deal. I have a bunch of people who are mad at

me because I won't accept credit cards. But in my case it's not just a business decision. I teach people all the time not to use credit cards, so I'd be the world's biggest hypocrite if I accepted them.

Your case is a little different. Still, if you and your wife have a moral or values issue with accepting credit cards, that's fine. It's okay for you not to accept them for payment. You'll probably have a few people turn up their noses at the idea of not being able to pay with credit, but if you've got great products and services, that will only amount to an occasional bump in the road.

But it's not okay for someone to give you grief over how your business is structured by saying, "You know, you ought to take credit cards so things will be easier for ME." Dude, did you forget how to write a check? I mean, really. It's not that hard!

– Dave

Married to an Entrepreneur

Dear Dave,

My wife is a very energetic entrepreneur. I'm a little more laid back, so we have very different personality styles. What's the best way to encourage and communicate with her, and not hold her back from her ambitions?

– Charles

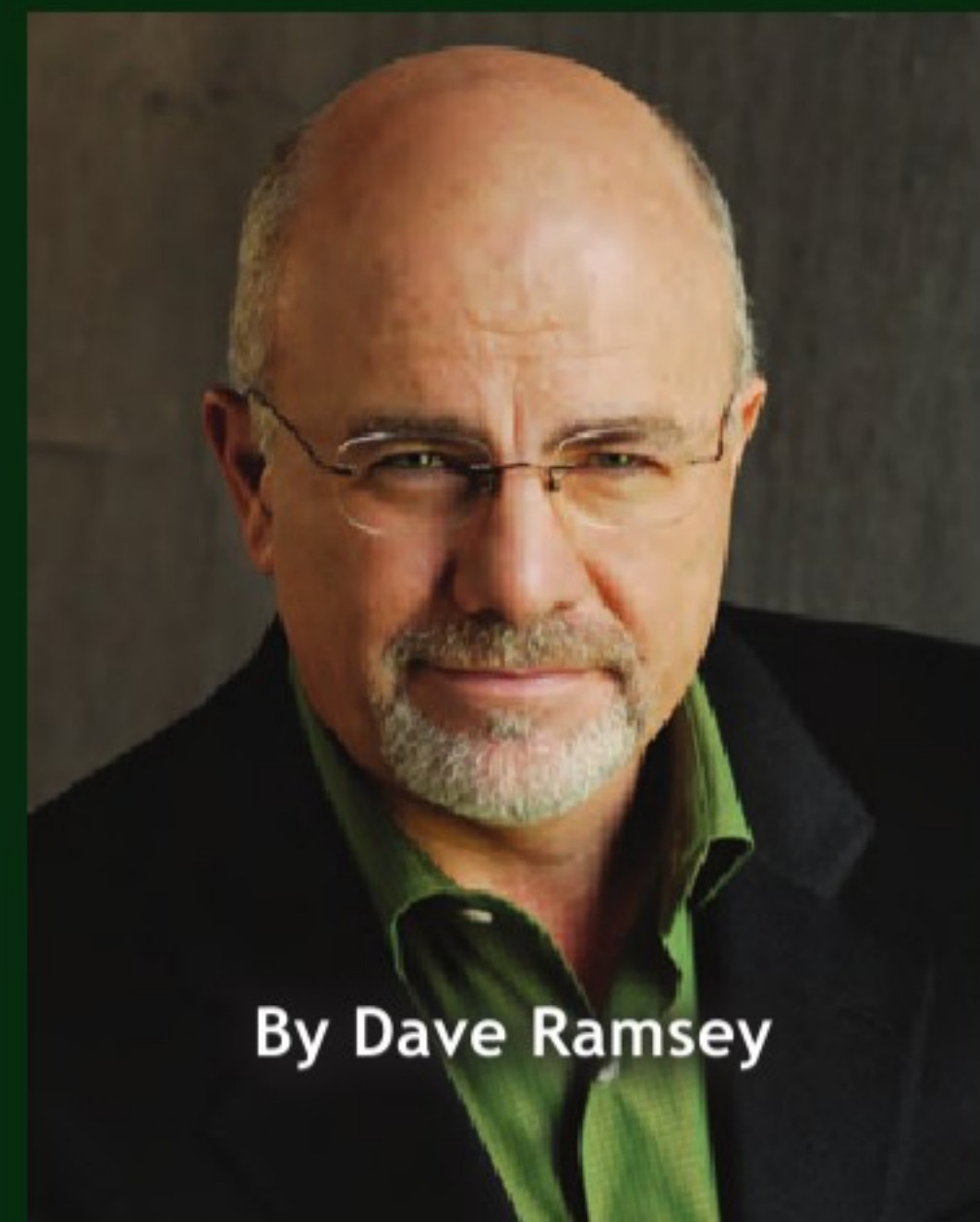
Dear Charles,

This is a great question! You've already taken the first step in recognizing and identifying your personality styles. If she's a hard-charging entrepreneur, there's a good chance God sent you into her life to slow her down enough so she can keep it between the ditches. That's what my wife does for me. She doesn't hold me back at all. But sometimes I'll get to a point where I'm so wrapped up in a project or new opportunity that I can't turn it loose. That's when she knows to step in and say, "Honey, did you ever think about this possibility?" or simply, "Dave, slow down!"

The fact that you're wired a little differently, that you can go slow enough to be observant and wise when things in her professional life are hectic, is one of the most valuable benefits you bring to your relationship. Once she understands and respects this, the more you guys—together—are going to win. It's going to make a positive impact on your lives, because you'll be making steady progress that's more predictable and reasonable versus sudden launches into the stratosphere that are usually followed by crashes.

I love these discussions about family and business. As you grow to better understand the other's thinking—and how each is necessary for success—a beautiful piece of music will be created. Your encouraging, but cautionary, due diligence side, and her energy and passion to pull things forward, can be the key to you guys making great things happen together!

– Dave



By Dave Ramsey

Mobile Beat Notes

Along with Dave's encouraging message, a cautionary note is also in order. Most DJ services are started and driven by an entrepreneur, usually an outgoing person with some performance ability, understanding of music and technical knowledge. They gradually expand their DJ company into new areas and possibly hire staff to go "multi-system" to be able to enteratin at multiple events each weekend.

The spouse of the entrepreneur is sometimes involved in the DJ company and sometimes is not. Yet he or she needs to know what is happening with the company; however, often the entrepreneur is so focused on the business, he or she doesn't communicate all the info necessary for the spouse to feel secure and supportive. A lot of stress can be avoided if the the DJ in the family, probably the one reading this, makes sure to update the non-DJ—completely—as to what is happening with the business.

*Dave Ramsey is America's trusted voice on money and business. He has authored five New York Times best-selling books, including **EntreLeadership: 20 Years of Practical Business Wisdom from the Trenches**. The Dave Ramsey Show is heard by more than 8 million listeners each week on more than 500 radio stations. Find Dave on the web at www.daveramsey.com.*

MB

A Penny Saved Is a Penny Earned

BUILDING YOUR BALANCE OF VIRTUE

By Jeffrey H. Gitomer

Ben Franklin sought to cultivate his character by a plan of 13 virtues, which he developed at age 20 (in 1726), and continued to practice in some form for the rest of his life.

His autobiography lists his 13 virtues as:

- 1) **Temperance.** Eat not to dullness; drink not to elevation.
- 2) **Silence.** Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself; avoid trifling conversation.
- 3) **Order.** Let all your things have their places; let each part of your business have its time.
- 4) **Resolution.** Resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve.
- 5) **Frugality.** Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself; i.e., waste nothing.
- 6) **Industry.** Lose no time; be always employed in something useful; cut off all unnecessary actions.
- 7) **Sincerity.** Use no hurtful deceit; think innocently and justly, and, if you speak, speak accordingly.
- 8) **Justice.** Wrong none by doing injuries, or omitting the benefits that are your duty.
- 9) **Moderation.** Avoid extremes; forbear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve.
- 10) **Cleanliness.** Tolerate no uncleanness in body, cloaths (sic), or habitation.
- 11) **Tranquility.** Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable.
- 12) **Chastity.** Rarely use venery but for health or offspring, never to dullness, weakness, or the injury of your own or another's peace or reputation.
- 13) **Humility.** Imitate Jesus and Socrates.

Franklin didn't try to work on them all at once. Instead, he would work on one and only one each week, leaving all others to their ordinary chance. While Ben did not live completely by his virtues, and by his own admission fell short of them many times, he believed the attempt at living them made him a better man. He believed these virtues contributed greatly to his success and happiness.

In his autobiography, Franklin wrote about the virtues, "I hope, therefore, that some of my descendants may follow the example and reap the benefit."

His list is certainly no be-all end-all list of virtuous characteristics, but it definitely gets you thinking about yourself and your virtues. Impossible not to.

Not wanting to in any way infringe on the genius of Ben Franklin, I'd like to offer some of today's characteristics of virtue and add to Ben's list.

I'll add a few words of definition to each, but more importantly, I suggest that you think about each of these virtues as it relates to YOU:

your self-disciplines, your actions, and your ethics. Maybe even rate yourself on each one as you read.

Were he alive today, Ben's virtues might have included:

- **Truth.** Your ability to be truthful to others and truthful to yourself.
- **Honesty.** Take honest actions you can be proud of.
- **Trust.** Be trustworthy and trusting. Trust others until proven otherwise. Be trustworthy by example.
- **Ethics.** The right way you conduct yourself in business and life.
- **Speed.** Response in today's world is immediate. How immediate are you?
- **Reliability.** People want to deal with reliable people. How reliable are you?
- **Loyalty.** Getting loyalty because you earned it. Giving loyalty because it's your philosophy.
- **Responsibility.** Not just responsible to others, but both to yourself and for yourself.
- **Observantness.** Having value based peripheral vision, both of others and yourself.
- **Consistency.** Making the highest and best decision—all the time.
- **Independence.** Not being a follower to be "safe," but being a self-ruler of your time and fate.
- **Faith.** Not just religion, faith in people, faith in family, and spirituality of self.
- **Self-Belief.** Belief in company, product, customer, and especially in yourself. Be a believer.
- **Confidence.** Confidence is evident often without saying a word. Radiate yours.
- **Enthusiasm.** Generate the inner spark of self-induced energy that lights up a room and the people in it.
- **Studiosness.** Learning more leads to earning more. Resolve to learn something new every day.
- **Respectfulness.** Things and people deserve initial respect. Give it to get it.
- **Kindness.** Every ounce of kindness is worth a fortune to those on the receiving end of yours.
- **Forgiveness.** Until you forgive the past—both actions and people—you are likely to repeat it.
- **Thoughtfulness.** Expressing both thanks and feelings. Remembering events and people.
- **Open-Mindedness.** Be willing to accept new things, willing to encounter at "change" and see it as "opportunity."
- **Appreciation.** Art and life. Look and see the beauty that abounds, the opportunity life affords, and appreciate your ability to choose the values you represent.
- **Gratefulness.** For health and happiness. Saying grace. Counting blessings, daily.
- **Loving.** Give love to get love. Give love to be loved.

Wow! Those are some values. How many are yours? Why not tackle one a week? I've given you a six-month supply. **MB**

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Jeffrey Gitomer is the author of twelve best-selling books, including *The Sales Bible* and *The Little Red Book of Selling*. His bestselling *21.5 Unbreakable Laws of Selling* is now available as a book and an online course at www.gitomervt.com. For public event dates and information about training and seminars visit www.gitomer.com or email Jeffrey personally at salesman@gitomer.com.

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Quality Control

BEING PROACTIVE IS THE ONLY WAY TO MAINTAIN PEAK PERFORMANCE

By Jason Weldon

We work with a lot of other companies when we do our events. Caterers, photographers, planners, designers, and more make events run smoothly. In fact, a good portion of our business comes from these industry partners, and we would never be where we are today if it wasn't for them.

And we have aligned ourselves next to some pretty top-notch professionals in our area, to boot. Each weekend we load in and load out and set up our events, sometimes not even knowing the client, as we are working for the florist or planner as part of their company. This makes

one of your DJ's events and checked in on them? How are they dressed, what does their set up look like, how are they behaving? These are all important things that you have to manage and make sure are being held up to your standards.

Many multi-op owners are working at the same time their DJs are out working, so this could be pretty hard to do. But I think it is a commonly overlooked step in the quality control process. Checking in on your events allows you to really drive home the point that you care and want to make sure things are being done the right way. You need to make sure this is part of your management process.

This isn't something that has to be done all the time. Six to eight times a year is enough. And don't ever tell your crews that you are coming. Simply start at one show and drive around to three or four others. Observe everything. See where they can get better. See how your company is actually being portrayed when you are not there. Take notes and use this as time to reflect.

Don't go up to your DJs until you are about to leave. And at that moment, don't ever tell them something is wrong, if you aren't happy with something. That is not the time or the place. Unless of course, it is blatantly obvious and damaging. But if things are

going great, tell them! Either way, make sure you drive home a few good points that you are happy with. In some cases, you are not going to like what you see. You will have the opportunity to address the situation after the event. You may be pleasantly surprised in what you find out as well. Ultimately, you will be doing your company a great service by checking in.

This time can also give you a chance to see other professionals. You can see the photographer, the videographer, the venue manager

and so on. This always is a great touch point for you to say "hi" and see them in action. You can also let them know why you are there and how important being consistent is to you.

On the flip side, you may be able to help out other professionals in your area as well. In some cases, you may be observing behavior from the other professionals that you don't think is acceptable. As a business owner, wouldn't you want to know if your team wasn't doing something up to par? Wouldn't you want a phone call about how they could be better or deliver a better experience?

With most of the vendors that we work with, I have a direct relationship with the owner. If I am out on a show and I see something that I know wouldn't fly with me, usually I know the owner would have no problem with me calling them and letting them know what was going on. Making sure everybody is successful is the ultimate goal for all of us.

And this doesn't only apply to companies with a few DJs. This can also be done with your office team. Sometimes it is key for you as the business owner to step away and let the team handle things themselves. Let them interact on a level without you being around. Let them make decisions and let them manage the business. If you are feeling lucky, stay away for a few days. Then come back and talk to each team member. See how things went. Ask them what problems occurred, and what they think are the best ways to fix them. This can be something exciting to come back to or it can be a huge headache. Either way, seeing what your office team does when you are not there is just as important as checking up on your event teams.

The point to drive home here is quality control. You need to have many different systems in place to make sure that quality is being maintained.

What do you do for your quality control? Have you given it any thought lately? You might be surprised at what you find when you work on managing it systematically throughout the year. In the end, it will help you tremendously. **MB**



our job even more critical, because not only do we have to make sure our crews are living up to our culture, but also the culture of the company we are working "as" for the day.

How confident are you in your team working under some else's management? When is the last time you showed up at

Jason Weldon is a wedding business consultant who specializes in small to medium-sized companies that want to grow their business. His objective is to help guide people through organizing their thoughts and laying the groundwork for a better, more successful start up. He currently lives in Philadelphia and is also the president of Synergetic Sound and Lighting, Inc. and DJ and A/V company.





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